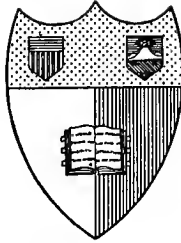




THE
HISTORIES
OF
TACITUS



G. G. RAMSAY



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THE HISTORIES OF TACITUS



Art. Repro. Co.

Otho.

Galba.

Vitellius.

Vespasian.

THE HISTORIES OF TACITUS

AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION

WITH INTRODUCTION FRONTISPIECE NOTES MAPS
AND INDEX

BY GEORGE GILBERT RAMSAY

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PROPERTIUS,' 'LATIN PROSE
COMPOSITION,' 'LATIN
VERSIONS,' ETC.

*C. PLINIUS TACITO SUO S.
Auguror, nec me fallit augurium, historias
tuas immortales futuras.*

PLIN. EPP. VII. 33, 1.

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET

1915

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A455140

P R E F A C E .

IN this translation of the Histories, as in that of the Annals which preceded it, it has been my endeavour to present a version of Tacitus which should carry with it none of the flavour of a translation, but should conform to what Mr. Jowett lays down as the first requirement for a translator, that 'his English *shall* be English'; which, secondly, should be strictly faithful, both in letter and in spirit, to the original, giving 'the sense, the whole sense, and nothing but the sense'; and thirdly, which should exclude from its vocabulary, so far as is possible, all modernisms: that is, all language which represents things or ideas, or carries with it associations, of a modern character, such as cannot have been present to the mind of Tacitus, or within the range of his comprehension. Such language, when attributed to him in a translation, gives an air of unreality to the whole.

Of the special difficulties presented to the translator of Tacitus by the peculiarities of his Latin, and of the different manner in which those difficulties have been met by earlier translators, enough has been said in the Introductions to Vols. I. and II. of this edition. The grammar of Tacitus, the whole structure of his sentences and periods, are essentially his own; he carries to an extreme those

differences in construction, syntax, and order, which naturally separate inflected from uninflected languages. The style of the Histories, indeed, is somewhat simpler than that of the Annals, which exhibit the Tacitean style in its most developed and artificial form; they are on the whole less peculiar in construction, and abound somewhat less in those daring epigrams which decline to domesticate themselves in any language but Latin. But the difficulties are the same in kind, and must be met by similar methods. The business of a translator is to reduce one language into the terms of another; and the peculiarities of the style of Tacitus are so great that his sentences have often to be taken to pieces and recast in a new form before they can pass as true and natural English. The translator's task is similar to that of one who has to take up a piece of mosaic pavement, and refit it into shapes quite different from those for which it was designed.

The general principles to be observed in translating from an ancient author have been well laid down by Dr. Warren, in his admirable study on that subject. 'A good translation,' he says, 'should read like an original; it must be idiomatic and natural in the language into which it is made.' If this condition is to be fulfilled, it is obvious that a literal translation is at once condemned. 'A really good translation should be not so much exact as faithful; it should not be free, but it should be, what is the same thing with a difference, liberal. Here, as elsewhere, the letter killeth, the spirit giveth life.'¹

¹ 'The Art of Translation,' being Essay III. of *Essays in Poets and Poetry* (1909), pp. 105 and 106.

The next important point is that 'though the translation should be liberal, it must preserve the individual differentiating character of the original.' To accomplish these two ends a certain amount of latitude may be allowed; 'the latitude must be sufficient, but not more than sufficient: it must be the minimum which will suffice to make the translation idiomatic and natural in the language into which it is made.'

To this last phrase—'translation with latitude'—I feel disposed to demur so far as it relates to prose translation. The phrase comes from Dryden; and by him certainly was intended to apply to poetry, not to prose. To translate a prose author 'with latitude' would be to translate him with something less than perfect accuracy; and such a deviation, so long as the original is intelligible, cannot be deliberately permitted. If a translator of prose cannot maintain strict fidelity to the sense of his author, he has failed in the principal object of his work.

The task of transmuting into natural English the somewhat intractable sentences of Tacitus may be approached by different methods; probably each translator will have methods of his own. It may be laid down as a good guiding rule for the translator that he should pay little attention to the construction of the original; pay great attention to the order; and none at all to the punctuation.

The dearth of Principal Verbs in Tacitus; the habitual paucity, the occasional multiplicity, of his grammatical Subjects; his facility for expressing side meanings by various grammatical devices unknown to English; the lucidity which inflection imparts to periods which in English would be cumbersome and

confused, make it often impossible to adopt the constructions used by Tacitus, whereas it is almost always possible to observe the sequence of his ideas, and to set them out in their due relation to each other.

In the matter of order, inflection plays a most important part. It is of the essence of good composition, in any language, that a sentence should at the earliest moment indicate the matter, or the point of view, with which it is about to deal; hence the rule, in English, that the grammatical Subject should stand at the beginning of the sentence, or as near to it as possible. But there is no need for such a rule in an inflected language like Latin. A Latin writer can indicate the trend of a coming sentence in various ways besides that of putting the Subject first. He can place his words in any order that suits him; he can attract attention to what he is about to say by placing at the beginning of his sentence any kind of word, in any construction that he pleases.¹ To be faithful to his original, a translator should keep to the sequence of the thought; and in nine cases out of ten he can only preserve the order by varying the construction.

¹ Horace, the greatest master of order of all the Latin writers, cares little in what part of his sentence he places the grammatical Subject; but in passing from one topic to another, or in bringing out a new phase of the same topic, he never fails to begin the new sentence with some important word, in any construction that suits his purpose, which at once indicates the connexion or contrast with what precedes, and strikes the keynote of the sentence which is to follow. Let any reader study carefully the fine logic with which the thought of the 1st Ode of Book III. is carried on from the beginning to the end of the poem, and consider what force is given to its separate sentences by such strong beginnings as: *Est ut viro vir* (line 9);

Destructus ensis (line 17); *Desiderantem quod satis est* (line 25); *Contracta pisces* (line 33). In each case the new sentence introduces a new point with some striking word which is not the grammatical Subject, but which indicates the essence of the meaning which is to follow. The words *Desiderantem quod satis est* introduce us to the cardinal point of Horace's philosophy. In some of his finest Odes Horace begins with an Accusative which announces the whole subject of the Ode and serves as a title to it, as in *Motum ex Metello consule civicum* (ii. 1); *Iustum et tenacem propositi virum* (iii. 3), etc. In English it is rarely possible to begin a sentence with an Accusative.

Tacitus varies infinitely the beginnings of his sentences; and the translator must begin his sentences with whatever construction will best enable him to bring out the true emphasis of the Latin. English is much more restricted in the manner of beginning its sentences than Latin. A comparison of a descriptive passage in Macaulay with a similar passage in Tacitus will show how much more frequently—sometimes with an iteration which is almost fatiguing—the English writer finds it necessary to put the grammatical Subject at the beginning of his sentences. And English, as compared with Latin, loses much in power and variety from its inability, except with Imperatives and other rare cases, to begin a sentence with a Finite verb, leaving the Subject to come after.

The examples given in Appendix I. (*a*) will show how readily, in simple sentences, the order of the Latin can be maintained by a change of structure. In larger and more complicated sentences, when various constructions are employed, and when dependent clauses are interlaced one within the other, the matter is more difficult; and there are passages in which the order of Tacitus is so different from what we should consider the natural order, that it is impossible to follow it in the English. See the examples in Appendix I. (*d*) and (*e*).

There are various other points as to which some diplomacy must be employed if constructions familiar to Latin are to be expressed naturally in English. The Ablative Absolute—so constant a feature of the style of Tacitus—must generally be replaced by some other construction in English. The sudden changes of Subject which occur in

Tacitus—changes doubtless intentional, but which to us give an appearance of confusion—must be avoided (see Appendix I. (b)). Again, if the English is to be real English, much care must be taken to see that the Active voice and the Passive voice respectively are used in accordance with English, and not with Latin, usage. Latin turns many of its sentences into a Passive form where English would prefer the Active; in other cases the English Passive is the best equivalent for the Latin Active. The simple sentence, *Germani prosperis feroces, Romanos pudor excitaverat* (v. 15, 13), illustrates the two points last mentioned. Here the two contrasted terms are ‘the Germans’ and ‘the Romans’; in English it would be intolerable to make the one the Subject, the other the Object, of a verb, with a corresponding change in the verb from the Active to the Passive. To copy the Latin phrase would give just that touch of strangeness to the expression which would proclaim it to be a translation.¹

As to punctuation, to say that in translating Tacitus no heed should be paid to the punctuation as given in modern editions, is merely another way of saying that the two languages differ in structure; that sentences are differently made, and differently joined together, in English and in the Latin of Tacitus. Tacitus knows nothing of that hierarchy of clause, sentence, and paragraph, on the due observance of which all harmonious writing in modern languages depends; the modes by which he expresses the relations between different sentences, whether of contrast or inference, are different from those used in English. Sometimes (as in iv. 13.

¹ See Appendix I. (c).

6-12) he will throw into one long period, with only one Principal Verb in it, a number of various assertions on different subjects, in different constructions, and with scarcely enough grammatical cement to keep the whole together.¹ Sometimes he will attach to one Principal Verb a mob of multifarious Subjects.² In the former case a series of propositions will have to be disentangled and smoothed out so as to make intelligible and consecutive English; in the latter, the one Principal Verb of the Latin will have to be multiplied into six or seven in the English.³ Sometimes Tacitus will put down a number of short detached sentences, which the translator should round off into a connected whole;⁴ and occasionally logic requires that a whole clause should be taken bodily out of one sentence and transplanted into another. Sometimes again ideas, half flashed out by a brilliant juxtaposition of words, and left grammatically imperfect, will have to be tamely, but less elliptically, developed into sentences by themselves. All such cases entail changes of punctuation; changes in the manufacture of sentences, or in their due subordination to each other. English cannot endure eccentricities which may be brilliant in the Latin; English is English, and must follow the principles of structure, and the methods of punctuation, which are suitable to its own genius.

A matter of capital importance in the translation of a classical author is the choice of a vocabulary. It is essential that a translator should avoid

¹ See Appendix I. (*e*).

² See Appendix I. (*f*).

³ See Appendix I. (*h*).

⁴ See Appendix I. (*g*).

modernisms. It is in this respect that the best modern translations are superior to their predecessors. It has at last come to be recognised that it is no part of the duty of a translator—it is, in fact, a capital offence on the part of a translator—to look for modern analogies in his original, and attribute to an ancient author sentiments and ideas which are essentially modern, and which could never have been within either his range of vision or the scope of his comprehension. Former translators of the classics prided themselves on imparting a modern flavour to their author; they thought it to be their business, if possible, to transmute the ideas of yesterday into the language of to-day. Their pleasure was to find in ancient literature views of life, modes of action, similar to their own; and to reinforce present-day opinions from the teaching of the past. ‘Different ages,’ says Dr. Warren, ‘have different sympathies.’ Each was gratified by finding its own ideas mirrored in the past; each required a translator in sympathy with itself. ‘The Renaissance finds Romanticism in the Classics; the Impressionist Impressionism; the Realist, Realism.’

Such attempts run counter to the true aim of translation; the desire to find the present in the past is one of the main reasons why earlier translations are so unsatisfactory. The writers are perpetually reading themselves and their own times into ancient authors, instead of endeavouring to reproduce the surroundings, mental and material, in which those authors actually lived. Early scholars may be forgiven; they had neither the knowledge nor the scholarship to penetrate into the mind of antiquity, or to reconstruct the outward world in

which the ancients lived. But modern scholarship and modern scholars have opened up to us the life and the thoughts of the ancients; and a modern translator has no excuse for not taking advantage of that knowledge. He should avoid all those anachronisms of idea which passed unnoticed or were applauded by our forefathers. A vocabulary suggests an atmosphere; and it is the translator's business so far as possible to suggest the atmosphere which his author breathed, and not infect it with his own. He should avoid all words, all phrases, all metaphors, which have an obviously modern origin; all side-long references to habits, institutions, ways of thought or life, which belong to modern civilization. He must endeavour, so far as may be possible, to keep within the ambit of ideas which he may conceive to have formed the mental horizon of his author.

A single anachronism of this kind may spoil a whole passage. If a reader finds attributed to Tacitus things which he never could have said or thought, he feels that a fraud has been perpetrated upon him. When translators tell us that some Roman Emperor 'seized' or 'occupied, the throne,' they forget that Roman Emperors had no thrones either to seize or occupy. We may admire the cleverness of the translator who rendered the Homeric *ὠκευπόρων νεών* by 'Ocean greyhounds'; but the phrase is no more appropriate to Homer than the speech put into the mouth of Ulysses by the eccentric Samuel Butler, 'Aldermen and Town Councillors of the Phaeacians, hear my words!' Equally inappropriate is the term 'co-respondent,' offered by a recent translator to represent the *adulter* of

Juvenal; and not less serious is the maladroitness of translating the phrase 'Divus Augustus' by such an expression as 'the sainted Augustus,' thus attaching to a well-known historical term the associations connected with mediaeval Christian life. And how can we be satisfied with a translation, however clever, which renders *vices impunitatis* in i. 72, 15 by 'a system of mutual insurance,' and thus presumes in Tacitus an acquaintance with some of the most up-to-date methods of modern finance? A translator may not be able to penetrate completely into the mind of an ancient author; but he is prohibited, by all the rules of common sense, from finding in it things which cannot possibly have been there.

In the writing of the Notes, I have had before me all the well-known editions of Tacitus, and have received especial help from that of Dr. Spooner, who has done for the Histories, in a somewhat different way, what Mr. Furneaux accomplished for the Annals; from the scholarly edition by Mr. A. D. Godley, whose felicities in the translation of difficult phrases make one desire that he could have translated Tacitus as a whole; also from the excellent and conscientious edition of Dr. Carl Heraeus. I have also consulted the great edition of Orelli, as revised by Meiser, and the very useful edition by Edward Wolff; and I have had in constant use M. Fabia's *Onomasticon Taciteum*, Smith's Classical Dictionaries, the *Companion to Latin Studies*, and other standard books of reference. In writing the translation I have found Gerber and Greef's *Lexicon Taciteum* of the utmost value.

To my friend and former assistant, Mr. Robert G. Nisbet, late Exhibitioner of Christ Church,

Oxford, and now Latin Lecturer in the University of Glasgow, I am under the greatest obligations for the help which he has given me in preparing this book. He has not only looked over all the proofs with the eye of an exact scholar and proof-reader, but he has also furnished me throughout with corrections, suggestions, and criticisms of a most valuable kind; and he has been of great service in bringing to my notice various points which have not always been accurately stated in the ordinary editions, and which we have been able to put right by reference to such works as Mommsen-Marquardt's *Handbuch der römischen Alterthümer*, Pauly-Wissowa's *Real-Encyclopädie* (so far as published), Daremberg and Saglio's *Dictionnaire des Antiquités*, the *Prosopographia Imperii Romani*, the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, and other similar works. Last, but not least, Mr. Nisbet has compiled a perfect Index.

It is almost unnecessary to add that I have made constant use of Mr. Bernard W. Henderson's brilliant and delightful book, *Civil War and Rebellion in the Roman Empire*. A student of military history, and possessed of a vigorous style, Mr. Henderson has subjected the narrative of Tacitus and those of our other authorities to a strict analysis from the military point of view, and has presented a clear and connected account not only of the campaigns which determined the issues of the Civil War, and of the war with Civilis, but also of the strategic considerations by which they were, or ought to have been, governed. I am not able to assent to all his conclusions; nor can I admit the justice of the various harsh criticisms which he pronounces on Tacitus;¹

¹ See Appendix II. and Notes on i. 70; ii. 19 and 40; and iv. 60. I

cannot admit the justice of blaming Tacitus for being unacquainted with the

but these are small matters as compared with the service which he has rendered in throwing a flood of fresh light and interest on one of the most memorable periods of Roman history. Tacitus need not shrink from any scrutiny, however strict; and I am confident that the more closely his work is studied, the greater will be the respect felt by scholars for the great historian of Imperial Rome.

Of previous translations and translators of Tacitus, I have said enough in the Introduction to the *Annals*, Vol. I.; but I desire to express my sense of the help afforded to all students of the *Histories* by the sound and serviceable version of Messrs. Church and Brodribb. My own translation was just completed when that of Mr. Hamilton Fyfe, published by the Clarendon Press, was put into my hands. I would speak of that translation with all respect. It is fresh, clever, conscientious, and often healthily idiomatic; but both in his choice of a vocabulary, and in his general manner of reducing the peculiarities of Tacitean diction into terms of English, he has adopted other methods than those which I have attempted to follow; and perhaps future students of the *Histories* will be none the worse for being able to consult two versions of that work written at about the same time, on different principles, and quite independently of each other.

For the text, I have had the advantage of being able to use for my translation the admirable text of the

principles of modern German strategy, nor does it seem reasonable to apply to a writer of the time of Tacitus the dictum that 'After a war one ought to write not only the history of what happened, but also the history of what was intended to happen.' Such a

proposition invites the question, 'How often does Caesar, the great soldier-historian of Rome, explain to us beforehand the strategic object of the various rapid movements which he so graphically describes?'

Histories prepared for the Clarendon Press by Mr. C. D. Fisher. That text is undoubtedly the best text of the Histories now in existence, relying, as it does, wherever possible, upon the supreme value of the unique Medicean or Laurentian MS. (68. 2), from which all other MSS. of the Histories are ultimately derived. That MS. is indicated by the letter M in this edition, Mr. Fisher's readings by the letter F. The few cases in which I venture to differ from Mr. Fisher's readings are not very important; they are all discussed in the Notes. In the following passages F. departs from the reading of M, while I retain it:—i. 3, 5; i. 43, 12; i. 71, 10; ii. 10, 10; ii. 40, 2; iv. 24, 4. In the following I prefer a reading different from that of M adopted by F.:—i. 49, 2; ii. 86, 17; iii. 9, 23; iv. 18, 6; iv. 4, 17; iv. 56, 7. In the following I take a reading differing from those both of M and F.:—i. 52, 10; i. 89, 7; v. 4, 17, 18. And in ii. 71, 6, I have ventured upon a conjecture of my own, reading *cenantem* for *cantantem*.

G. G. RAMSAY.

DRUMORE, BLAIRGOWRIE,

Jan. 15, 1915.

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INTRODUCTION.

LOVERS of Tacitus will perhaps always differ as to which of his two great works is to be deemed the greater—the *Annals* or the *Histories*. Dr. Spooner, in the excellent Introduction to his edition of the *Histories*, awards the palm to that book, as being both historically and artistically the more successful of the two. Others will be rather inclined to regard the *Annals* as the more important work, both on account of its larger scope, and of the greater number of interesting political problems with which it deals. And it was certainly by the *Annals* that the greatest enthusiasm was created at the time of their first re-appearance, coming as a revelation from the old world to teach a hatred of tyranny, and kindle a love of liberty and public virtue, in the new.

The *Annals*, when complete, narrated in probably eighteen books a period of fifty-four years, from the death of Augustus in A.D. 14 to that of Nero in A.D. 68. The portion that has come down to us covers about forty-three years—the parts unhappily lost having contained two years of the reign of Tiberius (A.D. 29–31), the whole reign of Gaius (A.D. 37–41), the first six years of that of Claudius (A.D. 41–47), and finally the last two years of Nero's reign (A.D. 66–68).

The *Annals* take up the history of Imperial

Rome at its most critical moment ; the moment when the master mind which had created the Imperial system was no longer there to guide it, and when it remained to be seen how far so craftily devised a constitution could be successfully carried on under successors who had none of the personal claims, and might possess little or none of the sagacity, of its originator. The Annals show us through what stages the new system of government got gradually into working order ; by what developments it learnt to accommodate itself to the needs of a vast Empire ; how soon the figment of senatorial government became illusory, and how all power steadily concentrated itself in the hands of one man, or of the advisers whom he might choose to call into his counsels. During this period the whole fabric of Imperial government was still more or less in the making ; and high political considerations present themselves at every step of the process.

The Histories, in their original form, were complete in twelve books, embracing a period of twenty-seven years and eight months, from the 1st of January, A.D. 69, to the death of Domitian on the 18th of September, A.D. 96. Had all the twelve books been written on a uniform scale, each book would have covered an average of something more than two years, as compared with an average of three years covered by each book of the Annals—a difference which might naturally be accounted for by the likelihood that an author would write with greater amplitude of the times nearer to his own. But the books of the Histories which have survived—Books I., II., III., and IV., with twenty-five chapters of Book V.—are written on a scale very different to this. Books I., II., and III.,

record the events of only a single year, from the 1st of January to the 23rd of December, A.D. 69; Book IV. brings the story down to the autumn of the year following; while the twenty-five chapters of Book V. are taken up with events on the Rhine and in Jerusalem which occurred partly in the year 69, partly in the year 70. Thus the Histories, as we possess them, narrate in a little more than four books the story of something less than two whole years.

This difference of scale forms an important element in a comparison of the two works. In the Annals there is a larger horizon; the narrative deals with a greater variety of subjects; almost every department of Imperial government, at home or abroad, has its share of notice; and while accounts of great foreign campaigns in Africa, Britain, and Armenia are given—not certainly with that fulness and accuracy which were to be desired—the main interest of the work is concentrated on the political aspect of affairs in Rome, on the doings of the Senate, and the personal action and character of the Emperor of the time.

In the Annals, many events are treated with extreme brevity; sometimes a number of detached facts are so crowded into a single chapter as to present the appearance of an epitome rather than of a connected narrative; and though such passages may delight the Latin scholar by the brilliant compactness of the phrasing, many of the topics dealt with afford little scope for the highest kind of historical narrative. There are occasional chapters, occasional years, in which the narrative is comparatively dull—as dull as it is possible for Tacitus to be; and much space, on the other hand, is given to certain topics,

especially to debates in the Senate, which possessed extraordinary importance in the eyes of Tacitus, but for which the modern reader would have gladly seen substituted further notices of the condition of the people, both in the capital and in the provinces.

The more epitomised passages in the *Annals*, if so they may be called, have indeed an artistic effect of their own. They afford, as it were, quiet resting-places between those more exciting portions of the work which describe scenes of action and of passion. But whenever the subject is such as to enable Tacitus to give free scope to his powers of description, he rises to the highest levels of strong, picturesque, and life-like narrative; in certain notable cases he brings out all the passion, all the pathos, of a situation with the skill of a consummate dramatist. There can scarcely be found in all literature narratives more thrilling, more full, in their terrible realism, of the elements of horror and pity, than are those in which Tacitus narrates the fall of Messalina (*Ann.* xi. 26-38); the deaths of Claudius (xii. 64-69) and Britannicus (xiii. 15-17); and the crowning iniquity of the murder of Agrippina and the events which led up to it (xiv. 1-13).

The distinguishing feature of the *Histories*, as we possess them, is that they are almost entirely occupied with one theme—the causes, the course, and the results of the great Civil War which occupied the whole of the year A.D. 69. They form one continuous narrative from beginning to end, embracing all the details, military and civil, of a great crisis which shook the Roman Empire to its foundations, and for a time seemed likely to imperil its very existence; but out of which, as events turned out, the Empire was to

emerge more powerful, more beneficent, than before, and to enter upon that phase of its history which for so many centuries preserved the peace, and captivated the imagination, of mankind.

So great a theme demanded a great writer; and such a writer was found in Tacitus—a supreme master in the art of narrative. That art, unhappily, has been decried of late years by many of our modern historians; and it is refreshing to find a champion of the cause of literary, as distinguished from so-called scientific, history appearing on the scene in the person of Mr. G. M. Trevelyan.

In his most interesting essay upon 'Clio, a Muse,'¹ Mr. Trevelyan lays it down that 'The art of History remains always the art of narrative'; 'History and Literature cannot be fully comprehended, still less fully enjoyed, except in connexion with each other'; and he enters a warm protest against the view that History should be treated as a science, rather than as a branch of literature, and employ no methods but those of exact research, such as are appropriate to the studies of a scientific laboratory. It is high time that such a protest were made; for as *The Times* pungently observed upon March 7, 1914, 'the public, intimidated by experts, fears now to believe any fact in history so stated that it can be read with pleasure.' According to the modern fashionable view, the chief, if not the sole, aim of History should be the discovery and verification of facts and documents, and the presentation of them in the baldest form, without ornament or attractiveness, without aiming at picturesqueness of statement, and without any attempt to introduce those elements of imaginative

¹ 'Clio, a Muse, and other Essays,' Longmans, 1913.

and emotional treatment, or those graces of style, which have been the glory of the English school of History in the past, and have given immortality to the names of Gibbon and Robertson, of Grote, Macaulay, and Carlyle.

Such historians as these have educated the taste, stirred the imagination, and quickened the emotions, of many generations; and it will be a national calamity if History shall cease to be treated in that broader human manner which has hitherto made it, for the general reader, one of the most potent instruments of education. It is delightful to find Lord Bryce also—himself a conspicuous example of how historical truth and literary charm can go hand in hand—vigorously taking up the cudgels to combat the position attributed to Professor Seeley that, ‘In order to be scientifically valuable, History must be dull or dry’; that it should avoid all literary grace, and banish not ornament only, but emotion from its sphere. ‘Aridity,’ says Lord Bryce, ‘makes no presumption of accuracy; the things that actually have happened are as interesting as the things that might have happened and did not; and just as picturesque’ (*University and Historical Addresses*, 1913).

History is essentially a human subject. The historian has to concern himself with human nature; not only with that of nations, but with that of individuals also; and Mr. Trevelyan truly says, ‘The so-called scientific historian may have more knowledge of facts, with less knowledge of man’; or as it has been said no less truly, ‘Men may be very learned without having any judgment at all.’ History is not a science; the problems of human progress cannot be stated in terms of evolution; and to apply the

term 'Laws of Nature' to such generalisations as can be made as to the general tendencies observable in the ways of men or of nations, is to misuse the terms of science. 'Nothing accords less with scientific principles,' says Lord Bryce, 'than to treat as similar things essentially dissimilar'; and 'the phenomena of human society which History deals with are altogether unlike the phenomena of external nature.' We may call an historian scientific if he takes as much care in investigating and sifting his facts as is requisite in science; but this is to use the word in a metaphorical sense. In this sense, says Lord Bryce, 'there is no incompatibility between the scientific treatment and the literary treatment of History'; and all may agree with him when he lays it down that for the production of the highest kind of historical work four gifts are specially needed:—(1) unwearied diligence in investigation; (2) a penetrating judgment which can fasten on the more important points; (3) an imagination which can vivify the past; and (4) that power over language which we call Style.

Judged by the standard thus laid down, Tacitus takes a high place among historians. That he fulfilled the first duty of the historian, and was diligent in the investigation of his facts, and careful in his statement of them, is impressed upon the reader by the whole tone and manner of his works, and by his continual reference to authorities—though he very seldom says who they were; and his activity in making inquiries is vouched for by the independent testimony of his friend and contemporary, Pliny the Younger. His general accuracy is attested by the steadiness with which his statements of fact have held their ground

in face of modern criticism. The very title of *Histories* (from *ιστορέω*, 'to know or learn by inquiry'), instead of *Annals*, implies care in personal investigation; and his candour is shown by the fact that even where his judgment has been called prejudiced—as in the comments which he makes upon Tiberius in the *Annals*—he so states his case as to put into the reader's hands the material for mitigating them. As to the judgments, often of a severe kind, which he passes on men and things during the course of the *Histories*, no one has ever brought any charge of prejudice or partiality against him; and our belief in his trustworthiness is much confirmed by a comparison of his narrative with those of other writers who have gone over the same ground as himself.

Three other writers—Plutarch, Suetonius, and Dion Cassius—have left us histories of the reigns of Galba and Otho. Each of these four writers tells his story in his own way, and in his own special style; but the correspondence between the facts given in the four accounts is so close, even in matters of detail—the points of difference are so slight and unimportant—that it is impossible not to feel that we have here a true and faithful account of the things as they actually occurred.

Granting the diligence and the good faith of Tacitus, we know that he would have ample means of informing himself as to the events which he describes. He was of an age to have witnessed some of them himself; and his social and official position was such that all sources of information, public and private, would be open to him. The facts of that terrible year must have burnt themselves into the minds of the generation that witnessed them; many

of the great families, no doubt, would have kept diaries or commentaries of their own; all would have their traditions, written or unwritten, of the stirring political events which had passed around them, or in which they had been concerned. In such accounts, compared and weighed and sifted by an historical mind like that of Tacitus, abundant material for the writing of a true History would be found; and the fact that his narrative so firmly holds its ground in that part of his history where it can be tested by comparison with the narratives of other historians, gives us a sure presumption—almost a guarantee—that he is not less to be relied on in other portions of his work where no such test can be applied.

We can thus feel confident that Tacitus fulfils the first of Lord Bryce's four conditions. He fulfils also the second and the third. Every line of his descriptions shows that he had an imagination that could vivify the past; and his judgments on men and things are of the most penetrating kind. Some modern critics would exclude all passion, all passing of moral judgments, from the domain of history. But here again Mr. Trevelyan points out that there is a dispassionateness which may be excessive. An impartiality which has no convictions, betrays no preferences, and passes no judgments on men and their actions, would exclude from History its most informing and educative elements. 'The glow of Macaulay's mind,' says Mr. Trevelyan, 'rendered his History an education in patriotism, humanity, and statesmanship'; and as we turn over the pages of Tacitus it is impossible not to feel that we are in the hands of one who was full of moral

fervour, who was animated by a passion for the right, and who passed judgment fearlessly on men and things according to the highest standards of the ancient world.

We come lastly to the fourth of Lord Bryce's qualifications for the highest kind of historical work—that mastery over language which goes by the name of Style. Here the eminence of Tacitus is undisputed; he occupies a unique and supreme place as the author of a style unmatched for brevity and brilliance, attaining its effects by methods entirely his own, many of them startlingly opposed to the ordinary principles of composition as laid down and practised by the professors of the craft.

Of the special characteristics which distinguish the Latinity of Tacitus, enough has been said in the Introductions to the *Annals*;¹ but there is one feature of his writing which has nothing to do with the peculiarities of his Latin, and which constitutes, from a literary point of view, the great merit of the *Histories*: his skill in narration, and in planning the whole strategy of his work.

Mr. Trevelyan strikes the true note when he lays it down that the first duty of History is to tell a story; and that it is in the art of narrative that the highest excellence of the historian lies. Herein is the distinction of Tacitus; he is an incomparable narrator. Whether it be a long tale or a short tale that he has to tell, he tells it in the best way. He knows how to choose and marshal his facts so as to leave a graphic and suggestive impression upon the reader's mind. He uses all the resources of the Latin language to accentuate

¹ See Vol. i., *Introd.* pp. lv.-lxiv.; and Vol. ii., *Introd.* pp. xlv.-lxxiii.

the light and shade of his story; he gives due prominence to the essential points, and leaves many things unsaid which might only have blurred the picture. He never overcrowds his canvas; and—rarest of all virtues in a story-teller—he knows exactly when to stop. He never bores by platitudes; he never strains credulity by exaggeration.¹ His narrative is always alive; it is full of human touches; and when a scene is such as to suggest emotion, the effect is produced, not by informing the reader beforehand what feelings the story ought to excite in his mind, but by so telling it that he feels them.

The manner of Tacitus in telling a story has recently been illustrated in a very convincing way by M. Philippe Fabia.² M. Fabia takes as his subject the history of the eventful day on which Galba was murdered—the 15th of January, A.D. 69. That day, as he observes, is known to us in greater detail than any other of the memorable days of antiquity. The events of that day have been related, with ample details, by our four historians—Tacitus, Plutarch, Suetonius, and Dion Cassius—writers of very different character and calibre, but all worthy of serious attention. In almost all essential points of fact these four narratives agree.

Selecting as a test the story of that fateful day as told by these four authorities, M. Fabia has subjected their statements to the most minute dissection, comparing them with each other clause by clause, and word by word, noting every point of difference, whether of expression or of fact, whether of addition

¹ Cf. Dion's statement (lxiv. 10) that 40,000 men fell in the battle before Cremona; and that of Josephus that 1,100,000 perished during the siege of Jerusalem. For the extravagant figures

of Josephus, see Milman, *History of the Jews*, ii. p. 379.

² 'Revue de Philologie,' tome xxxvi., Année 1912, Librairie C. Klincksieck, Paris.

or of omission, as the case may be. The result of this minute comparison is to bring out in a marked manner the superiority of the version given by Tacitus on its literary and artistic side, as well as to create the impression that, where there are discrepancies between the different accounts, the version of Tacitus is the most coherent and probable of the four. M. Fabia's final judgment on the merits of the four narratives may be given in his own words:—

‘Parmi les journées mémorables de l’antiquité classique il n’y en a aucune sans doute dont nous connaissions plus abondamment le détail, que celle où Rome vit la chute de Galba et l’accession d’Othon à l’empire. Des quatre historiens par lesquels nous sommes renseignés, l’un, il est vrai, le plus récent, Dion Cassius,¹ tel du moins que nous le possédons, n’apporte pas grand’chose qui se puisse ajouter aux données réunies des autres. Ceux-ci, utiles tous les trois, le sont inégalement : Tacite² est le plus instructif de beaucoup, Plutarque³ vient ensuite, et fort loin derrière eux Suétone.⁴ Au point de vue littéraire, la supériorité de Tacite éclate encore plus manifeste qu’au point de vue historique. Dion ne nous offre qu’un résumé sec et mal bâti. Suétone coupe assez gauchement, pour le répartir entre les biographies de Galba et d’Othon, son récit qui d’ailleurs ne dénote pas la moindre préoccupation artistique. On ne peut pas dire, malgré quelques lacunes, que celui de Plutarque manque en général de cohésion ; mais, incolore et prolixe, il tire de la matière même tout son intérêt sans la faire aucunement valoir. La narration de Tacite, plus substantielle et plus précise, plus solidement construite, éloquente et pittoresque, mêlant à l’exposé dramatique des actes la recherche perspicace des mobiles, mérite seule, à vrai dire, le nom d’oeuvre d’art. Voilà quelles constatations résultent, me semble-t-il, d’une simple lecture comparative des quatre récits. Une

¹ Dion Cassius, lxiv. 5-6.

² Hist. i. 27-49.

³ Galba, 24-28.

⁴ Galba, 19-20 ; Otho, 6-7.

étude approfondie, si elle permet de les mieux motiver, ne les modifie point.¹

And indeed no story could be more finely told than that in which Tacitus narrates the rapid course of events beginning with the first intrigues of Otho against Galba, down to the fatal catastrophe of the 15th of January. First Otho's ambitions are disclosed, which take a criminal direction from the moment when he discovers that he is not to be adopted by Galba. In ignorance of what is brewing, kept in the dark by his incompetent advisers, Galba announces the adoption of Piso in a pedantic philosophic speech, bearing no kind of relation to the circumstances of the moment, but full of calm confidence, as if he had all the resources of the Empire at his back. He takes no pains to conciliate either the army or the Senate; he offends the one by his untimely niggardliness, the other by the harshness of his measures. Otho steadily and insidiously pursues his policy of corrupting the army. By the 15th of January all is ready; Galba is sacrificing in the Palace, when Otho makes an excuse for slipping away, and is met in the

¹ The relation of these four authors to each other—especially that of Tacitus to Plutarch—has not yet been conclusively solved. A careful comparison of the two narratives has been made by M. Philippe Fabia (*Les Sources de Tacite*, 1893), and more recently by Dr. E. G. Hardy (*Studies in Roman History*, First Series, 1910). They show that the whole structure of the two narratives follows the same lines; there is the greatest similarity between them, not in details only, but in language also; yet the testimony of dates, so far as known, combined with that of internal evidence, tends to prove that neither author copied from the other, but that each based his narrative on some author or authors common to both. M. Fabia and Dr. Hardy agree in holding that there was one principal

source, that source being the History of Pliny the Elder, who wrote a history from the beginning of Nero's reign down to the early part of the reign of Titus. Pliny's work is quoted by Tacitus (*Hist.* iii. 28, and *Ann.* xiii. 20); but Tacitus quotes other writers as well, in particular Fabius Rusticus, Cluvius Rufus, and Vipstanus Messala; and the evidence seems hardly to justify the conclusion that he followed only one main authority. He frequently refers to other authorities, without naming them, as *invenio apud quosdam auctores* (ii. 37); *inter omnes auctores constat* (iii. 29); *celeberrimos auctores habeo* (iii. 51); *plurimi auctores consentiunt* (v. 3); and it is hard to believe that he used these words in any but their natural meaning.

Forum by a handful of soldiers who salute him as Emperor. The scenes that follow are splendidly described: Galba still sacrificing to the gods of an Empire no longer his own; the sudden dismay in the Palace when the news of Otho's attempt arrives; the confusion of opinions as to what should be done; the vacillations of Galba; the false and feeble flatteries which are poured on him; the hopelessly weak and despairing speech which Piso addresses to the Cohort on guard, as contrasted with the confident and fiercely demagogic harangue of Otho to the soldiers; and finally the terrible scene in the Forum: all this is recounted with a picturesque and dramatic force which makes the whole story stand out in living reality before our eyes.

And it is the same with the Histories as a whole. The short period of time, filled with a continuous rush of great events, which is covered by these four and a half books, enables Tacitus to put forth all his strength as a narrator. The skill with which he arranges the general plan of his story is as great as that shown in his descriptions of particular incidents. The frequent changes of place, and time, and scene, the pungent descriptions of the principal personages concerned, all show the hand of a literary artist intent upon interesting his readers, and determined not to weary them. He has something new and fresh to say at every turn, as well as something quite his own in his manner of saying it. There is not a dull chapter, scarcely a dull phrase, in the whole book; and the interest of his story never wanes as he passes from the city to the camp, from Spain to Africa or to Britain, from the German Army to the Pannonian, from Jerusalem to the Rhine, as he recounts, link by

link, the great chain of events, following their course in every part of the Roman world, which led up to the final establishment of peace and order under Vespasian.

In addition to the general power of his narrative, there are two features in the writing of Tacitus which call for notice ; his delineations of character, and his speeches. He was a profound observer and analyser of human nature, so much so that he has been called more of a moralist than an historian ; and much of the living interest of his story is due to his subtle and pungent portraitures of the important persons whom his story brings upon the scene. There are few passages in Latin prose literature more remarkable for condensed force and shrewd appreciation than those in which he sums up the characters of Galba (i. 49), Titus Vinius (i. 48), Vitellius (ii. 86), Antonius Primus (ii. 86), Vespasian (i. 50 and ii. 5), Mucianus (i. 10 and ii. 5), Tigellinus (i. 72), and other prominent personages. And few persons have ever received such a glowing eulogium as that which he pronounces on Helvidius Priscus (iv. 5).

The speeches in Tacitus present a marked contrast with those of Thucydides ; for whereas the narrative of the latter is natural and simple, his speeches are full of subtleties both of thought and language. Tacitus, on the other hand, is often difficult and strained in his ordinary narrative, but his speeches are comparatively simple and straightforward, both in construction and ideas. In this Tacitus showed the juster judgment. A speech addressed to an audience should be clear in expression and simple in thought, so as to be readily apprehended

at a first hearing ; the epigrammatic or tortuous forms of speech which would be welcomed by a coterie of learned persons, would fall flat upon the ears of a popular audience.

The speeches which occur in Tacitus are models of clear, forcible statement. They serve greatly to brighten the narrative. They are introduced when some important situation demands dramatic treatment, and they enable the writer to explain in a vivid way the ideas and the motives which he conceives to have actuated the principal persons concerned, or to have determined the course of events.

Some of the speeches are given in the actual words of the speaker, some in the *oratio obliqua* ; a distinction which must carefully be followed by the translator. Those which are put into the mouths of Galba (i. 15 and 16), of Piso (i. 29 and 30) and of Otho (i. 37 and 38 ; 83 and 84), during and after the crisis which ended in the murder of Galba, not only put the whole situation before us, but also exhibit, as no mere description could, the characters of the speakers. They show Galba as an excellent person, but pedantic, self-satisfied, impracticable, and wholly ignorant of the real state of affairs around him ; Piso, as dully virtuous, without an inspiring word for his soldiers, lecturing them on the immoralities of Otho, ready, in a moment of supreme crisis, to endure rather than to act, and only in his last words making a half-hearted offer of the donative which had been so long withheld.

The speech of Otho to the Praetorians, on the same day, is a masterpiece of the demagogic art. He throws himself passionately into the arms of his men ; makes them feel that he and they must perish or be saved together. He alternately inflames their wrath,

excites their fears, appeals to their cupidity, and even to their superstition, ending with a trumpet-call for immediate action in their own interests.

In his later speech (i. 83, 84), after the outbreak of the Praetorians, when speaking, not as conspirator, but as Emperor, Otho adopts another but a no less persuasive tone. His soldiers have erred only from over-affection for himself; they must learn to modify their transports; with war before them, they must understand that discipline means command, and command obedience. Above all, not one word must be uttered against the dignity and majesty of the Senate! Tacitus must have highly enjoyed the irony of putting these sentiments in favour of discipline and established order in the mouth of the great fomenter of indiscipline. Very interesting also is the speech made to Vespasian by Mucianus (ii. 76, 77). That speech enables us to understand exactly the relation to one another of these two men, on whose co-operation the whole success of the Flavian cause depended.

These speeches are all given in the *oratio recta*: but where the object is only to present in the briefest form a series of argumentative propositions, as in the speech of Suetonius Paulinus at the Council of War (ii. 32), or of Antonius Primus at Poetovio (iii. 2), or in those of Helvidius Priscus and Eprius Marcellus in the Senate (iv. 7 and 8), the oblique form of speech is used, with a power of concentration which would make the fortune of a Parliamentary shorthand reporter.

The dying speech put into Otho's mouth by Tacitus and the other historians illustrates an interesting phase of ancient sentiment. No Stoic could be

expected to let slip such an opportunity for the glorification of suicide; least of all Tacitus, who has told us that one of the redeeming features of the period he is about to describe is 'that there were death scenes in it as noble as those celebrated by antiquity.' One of the deaths alluded to in that passage was certainly that of Otho; and it affords an instructive comment on the ideas of the ancients to find the sternest of Roman moralists placing a halo of glory round the brow of one of the most dissolute, traitorous, and unprincipled of Roman Emperors; putting him, it would seem, into almost the same class as Socrates, and his own hero Thræsea, merely on the ground that he put an end—bravely, no doubt, in his last moments—to his own life.

All our four authorities give us Otho's dying speech; and it is satisfactory to note that the version of Tacitus is simpler and less exaggerated than those of the Greek Historians. Suetonius gives the gist of the speech in one sentence: *Non amplius se in periculum tales tamque bene meritos coniecturum* (Otho, 10).

Dion Cassius attributes to Otho the most noble sentiments—love for all Romans, hatred of civil war, etc.—and makes him soar into the highest flight of altruism:—

πολὸν γάρ πον καὶ κρείττον καὶ δικαιοτέρον ἐστὶν ἕνα ὑπὲρ πάντων ἢ πολλοὺς ὑπὲρ ἐνὸς ἀπολέσθαι (lxiv. 13)—

a passage which might seem to be an almost literal translation of the speech of Caiaphas in St. John xi. 50, 'Nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole people perish not.'

Plutarch is scarcely less extravagant. Otho declares that 'the regard which his fellow-soldiers

have shown him makes him deem that day a happier day than that on which they made him Emperor'; and asks them 'not to deprive him of the greater glory of dying on behalf of such men, and of laying down his life for his country.'

The speech in Tacitus is less high-flown (ii. 47), and makes Otho pronounce almost an apology for the errors of his life. Yet even he attributes to Otho an extravagant sentiment which can only be regarded as contemptible in the mouth of the General of a fine army:—'The greater the hopes you hold out to me should I choose to live, the nobler will be my death.'¹

Otho's suicide makes Tacitus deal tenderly with the crimes and follies of his life. A voluptuary, a traitor, a murderer and supplanter of his patron, he gained the love of his soldiers by a popular manner, by giving them free license, and by surrendering all strictness of discipline. The one point recorded in his favour is that when war became inevitable, he marched stoutly out from Rome at the head of his army. But he did not share its dangers; he surrendered himself to his worst advisers, dismissed his best generals, and by the issue of peremptory orders to fight, while he himself remained at a distance from the battle-field, hurled his faithful army to its destruction. Yet in his review of Otho's career, Tacitus seems to hold that the manner

¹ Tacitus thinks that Otho had the means, even after Bedriacum, of carrying on the war: *ut nemo dubitet potuisse renovari bellum atrox lugubre incertum victis et victoribus*. Modern commentators disagree with this opinion; they generally hold that after Bedriacum Otho had no choice but to submit. Nevertheless, it may be remembered that the forces united under

Otho were precisely those by which the Flavian victory in October was secured—in fact greater, because the 14th legion had by that time been sent to Britain. One may fairly suggest that if Otho had retreated rapidly after Bedriacum towards Aquileia and joined the Danubian army—with the Eastern army in support behind—he might have saved the situation.

of his death is enough to compensate all his faults :— ‘Two notable deeds, the one infamous, the other glorious, gained for him in the eyes of posterity an equal share of good and of evil fame’ (ii. 50).

These speeches have cast a glamour over the death of Otho which has attracted even our own writers. Mr. Henderson admits that ‘Otho was careless, licentious, ambitious, possibly selfish, treacherous’; but he adds that ‘he died like a true Roman when all was done.’ To call Otho’s death that of ‘a true Roman’ seems to me an abuse of language. There was nothing about the death of Otho to make it comparable to those of the true Roman heroes named by Dion Cassius—Mucius, Decius, Regulus—who sacrificed themselves for their country. At the best, he faced death like a man when he had to die; but it was a death of pusillanimous despair, and Dr. Hardy is more just in saying that ‘The only alternatives for Otho were to await the executioners of Vitellius or to face a voluntary death. He chose the worthier course.’¹

Never was there a period which more deserved the services of a brilliant writer than that embraced by the Histories. The year A.D. 69 was a year full of thrilling and tragic events, affecting every portion of the Empire; it was a year of four Emperors; a year which devastated Italy, and inflicted untold calamities upon the Roman people. It was a year big with the future destinies of Rome; seldom has History seen determined in so short a time issues so momentous for the future peace and happiness of mankind.

¹ *Studies in Roman History*, Second Series, p. 196. The better modern view of suicide is brought out in a paragraph of one of our leading newspapers at the time of the *Titanic* disaster, in

regard to the ‘incredible story that the *Titanic* captain committed suicide. British captains are not cowards, and we can only regard the allegation as a singularly cruel and heartless one.’

For now, for the first time since its institution, the system of Imperial government, so skilfully devised by Augustus, was fairly put upon its trial. During the gloomy and distracted period which extended from the last days of Nero to the firm establishment of Vespasian in power, an impartial and competent observer of events might well have felt doubts as to the stability of the Empire. He might have asked himself what were the chances that the Empire would hold together, after all the causes which had brought it into being seemed to have disappeared. The change from Republican to Imperial Rome was one of the most amazing and far-reaching changes of government that has ever been made in the development of political institutions. That change had been bitterly opposed by all the noblest spirits of the time ; it seemed to be repugnant to the very genius of Rome, and to involve the turning of her back on all that was best and greatest in her past.

What then were the causes, and the forces, by which that great change had been brought about ? To the ordinary onlooker, they would seem to have been mainly three in number : (1) the lassitude of a world enfeebled, distracted, and demoralised, by a generation of internecine civil strife ; (2) the prestige of the great name of Caesar ; and (3) the consummate political genius, and the rare good fortune, of one man, who not only conceived the original idea of building up an autocratic military government upon a foundation of democratic forms, but also lived long enough to keep a steady hand upon the machinery which he had created, and to bring it into fair working order before he died. Added to this, partly in virtue of his own great services to the State, partly by a series of

elaborate devices, Augustus had succeeded in attaching to the Imperial person much of the divinity that doth hedge a king, and thereby gave a kind of religious unity to the divers nationalities of the Empire.

But all these forces had disappeared. The Empire had been in the enjoyment of a profound peace, disturbed only on the frontiers, for a hundred years; the magic name of Caesar was no longer there to conjure with: the last connecting link with the lineage and blood of the great Caesar—and a very indirect link it was—had been broken by the death of Nero. The prayers and praises of a grateful people had long ceased to descend upon the holder of the Imperial place: after the experience of a Caligula, a Claudius, and a Nero, what likelihood was there that the veneration paid to Augustus would be extended to unworthy successors, or that any new claimant who might be raised to power by the victory of a moment would be hailed, as Augustus had been hailed, as ‘Father of his Country’? And would any man be found strong enough to sit in the seat of the Caesars?

The unity of the Empire had been brought about by two men of genius—one a great soldier, the other a great statesman—each of whom had the military resources of the State enthusiastically behind him. Would that unity survive in a time when there were no men of genius; when there was no cohesion, or even sympathy, between the scattered armies on which the Imperial power rested? Was it not possible that just as the Empire of Alexander had been split up into its component parts, there might be a scramble for power between rival Generals and

their armies—no one of them strong enough to carry all before him—a scramble which might result in the dismemberment of the Empire, and the establishment of several petty empires in its place? Would the heads of the noble Roman houses, many of whom had commanded great armies in the field, be content to sink their several personal ambitions, and submit loyally to the first conquering general who might present himself: one who would carry with him none of the prestige, none of the personal and family claims, which attached to the house of the Caesars? Might not the spirit of faction, which had well-nigh ruined the Republic, break out more furiously than before, and, if only for a time, rend the Empire asunder? And last of all, was there no craving for liberty left? Was there no man, and no party, to follow in the steps of Brutus and Cassius, and demand the restoration of the Republic?

At the moment of Nero's death there was trouble everywhere; the horizon seemed as black as it could be; and we may well ask, What were the living forces of the time which enabled Rome, in a crisis so acute, to overcome all her difficulties, to preserve her unity unbroken, and to continue with more resolution than before that career of order and good government which has won the admiration of mankind?

The struggles of the year A.D. 69 were so quickly and so decisively ended that we are apt to forget the conditions of uncertainty and alarm which prevailed throughout the Roman world after the suicide of Nero on that 9th of June, A.D. 68, and which had prevailed for some time before his death. Under his tyrannical and capricious government, the administration of the Empire had got out of joint; the army

had not been conciliated; there was discontent and disaffection throughout the provinces, especially among the peoples and armies of Gaul and Germany; and as Nero left no heir, the problem of the succession arose in its acutest form.

The famous words of Tacitus when he announces the disclosure of the Imperial secret that 'Emperors could be made elsewhere than at Rome' (i. 4), might seem ominous of coming disaster. They suggest a period of chaos and anarchy among contending armies; they suggest some sort of division of the Empire, a weakening of the central authority, a transference of political power to some other centre or centres than Rome. Yet Tacitus did not use the words in that sense; and the only other occasion on which he seems to speak in a despairing tone of the fortunes of Rome is when he tells us that on the 1st of January, A.D. 69, 'The consuls Galba and Vinius entered upon the year that was to be their last—and *well-nigh the last of the Republic*' (i. 11). But it is evident that Tacitus himself entertained no fears as to the stability of the Empire; never for one moment did he feel any misgiving as to the future destinies of Rome. Hardly conscious of the real meaning of the things passing before his eyes, he does not seem to have felt that any great danger was at that moment hanging over the Empire as a whole. As Professor Haverfield says:—'The Roman Empire was only half understood by the men who lived under it. Not even the greatest of her historians, Tacitus, appreciated the State which he served and described.'¹

But whatever fears might have been entertained

¹ *The Study of Ancient History at Oxford*, p. 22.

during that year of crisis as to the maintenance of the Empire, and the stability of the Imperial Constitution, they were all falsified by the event. The Empire had struck its roots deeper into the lives and hearts of the populations which it embraced than even contemporaries could understand. Rome proved greater than her armies; greater than her greatest men. For though during the course of a few months she saw her armies, one after another, meeting in deadly combat, sustaining and inflicting the most terrible defeats; though she saw the fair fields of Italy trampled upon by invading hordes, and subjected to wholesale spoliation, under leaders who had no regard for public interests, and who, when fighting was once over, seemed to care for nothing but the gratification of their appetites; though the capital itself became the scene of sanguinary conflicts, amid the cynical indifference of a populace dead to patriotic feeling, and ready to turn the calamities of their country into an opportunity for sensuous enjoyment;—through all these horrors the true Rome remained unbroken, emerging from them calm and resolute, prepared to resume, with more steadfastness and pertinacity than ever, her task of governing the nations.

Nothing can be finer, and in its way more true, than the figure by which Tacitus compares the various horrors of this year, when all was over, to the stages of a great lustration ceremony which had to be gone through for the purification of the Empire:—

‘At Rome, the Senate conferred all the usual Imperial honours upon Vespasian with joy and confidence, seeing that the civil strife which had broken

out in Gaul and Spain, which had stirred Germany and then Illyricum to arms, and had now passed, like a lustration ceremony, through Egypt, Judaea, and Syria, and through all the provinces and armies of the Empire, now seemed, after purifying as it were the entire world, to have reached its end' (iv. 3).

And again, at the beginning of the year A.D. 70, after telling how the various legions which had been concentrated at Rome were distributed through the Empire, he calmly adds—

'All elements of disturbance having thus been removed, the city resumed its normal aspect, the laws and the magistrates their authority' (iv. 39).

Thus the danger of disruption passed away, never again to return until the Empire was near its end. But it may be worth while now to consider what had been the nature and extent of the difficulties which had been surmounted, what were 'the sickly elements in the Empire,' as Tacitus calls them, which rendered necessary so violent a method of purification.

The most patent of these weak or sickly spots was the absence of any regular means of determining the succession. On this all-important point Augustus had made no provision; the circumstances of his own family left him no resource but the method of adoption; and now even that last method had failed. On the death of Nero the last link of connexion with the house of the Caesars, whether by adoption or otherwise, disappeared; and the Roman world found itself without rule or guidance as to the choice of a successor. Galba indeed, being himself without an heir, proposed to establish a new system, summoning a council of his intimates to hold what Tacitus calls

a kind of 'Imperial Comitia.' In the pedantic speech put into his mouth by the historian, while professing to have been himself called to Empire by the consent of Gods and men, Galba suggests for the future a higher and nobler method of selection, according to which all claims of birth or favour should be set aside, and a virtuous Emperor should choose the wisest and most virtuous citizen to succeed him.

Such a method of selection might have commended itself to the Royal Commission which has lately been considering the methods of appointment in our own Civil Service; but Galba was before his time in suggesting it. Later Emperors, indeed, of greater authority than Galba, when firmly seated in power, practically did what Galba vainly attempted to do; but Galba's position was too insecure, he had too little power behind him, to make his choice respected; and the attempt cost him his life. The true 'Imperial Comitia' were held, not in the council-chamber of the Palace, but on the fields of Bedriacum and Cremona, and in the sanguinary battles fought within the walls of Rome herself.

When Tacitus formulated the principle that henceforth 'Emperors might be made elsewhere than in Rome' (i. 4), he only meant what he said; *i.e.* 'by other voices than those of the Praetorians.' He never contemplated any breaking up of the Empire. No vision of a restored Republic was dangling before his eyes; the generation had long passed away which had sighed over Brutus and Cassius as 'the last of the Romans.' There was no political issue, there was not even a personal issue, at stake in the great conflict about to begin; in the eyes

of Tacitus, and of every Roman, the only practical question to be decided was, From what quarter, from what army, was the new master of the Empire to come?

And yet there was one source from which danger to the Empire might have been apprehended—the principle of nationality; and there was one most important part of the Imperial dominions in which that principle was not extinct. ‘Gallic nationalism,’ says Mr. Henderson, ‘was an ever-present peril to the Romans for more than a century after the death of its greatest champion; there was not a single Emperor from Augustus to Vespasian who was not made aware of its existence.’

In the last days of Nero, a new champion of Gallic nationality had arisen in the person of Vindex. Vindex gathered round him a force of 100,000 men; and Galba, then Governor of Hispania Tarraconensis, thought the movement so important that he felt constrained to enter into some kind of terms with it. In the end, Galba had to withdraw from this compromising partnership; and the whole force of the German army under Verginius was needed to put the rising down. Nevertheless Galba, when he became Emperor, found it necessary to make some concessions to the defeated Gauls; he conferred privileges on the tribes that had sympathised with Vindex, and punished those which had gone against him: though indeed, by these and other short-sighted measures, he materially contributed to that state of disaffection which resulted in the revolt of the German armies.

The brilliant successes of Civilis in the years A.D. 69 and 70 are enough to show how strong was the

spirit of independence even in the more Romanised of the Gallic states; and what a formidable obstacle to Roman power might have been created in the region of the Rhine if Gaul and German could have controlled their inter-tribal jealousies. But the result of that war was to dash all such hopes for ever to the ground. Never could there have been a more favourable moment for a rising against Rome than that chosen by Civilis in the autumn of the year 69. Rome was then bleeding at every pore; her whole government was disorganised; her armies were engaged in a frantic internecine struggle in which it seemed likely that they would consume each other; and Civilis seemed justified in assuming that the days of Roman domination were gone.

But the spirit of Rome was not to be conquered thus. Even in those darkest moments on the Rhine border, when defeat, treachery, and insubordination had demoralised, and almost destroyed, the Roman legions; when Roman generals and legates were being thrown into chains and murdered by the troops whom they should have been leading to victory—even then the remnants of the Roman legions were still conscious of the pride of being soldiers of Rome; they were still unable to shake off altogether the sense of Roman discipline and order. Tacitus comments upon the curious alternation of 'insubordination and punishment, of mad violence and obedience' that showed itself in the conduct of the men:—'the men whom nothing could control would yet submit to chastisement' (iv. 27).

And from the moment when the air was cleared—as soon as the settlement of things in Rome permitted thought to be given to the affairs of the

frontier—the power of the central government made itself felt once more. Fresh legions were hurried over the Alps; the disturbed districts were rapidly reduced to order, in no revengeful spirit; and Roman authority was re-established, once and for all, throughout the whole of the Gallic and German provinces. And from that time forward the principle of nationality ceased to be a danger to the Empire in the West.

In the East, there was one nation in which the spirit of nationality still survived, in its most stubborn form. But stiff-necked as the Jews were, they were little likely to become a source of danger to the Empire. What the Romans deemed their chief national characteristic—*adversus omnes alios hostile odium* (v. 5)—prevented them from attempting to co-operate with any of their neighbours against Rome; their one national aim—that also a deadly sin in the eyes of the Romans—was to preserve inviolate their own religion and traditions. Had Roman governors governed as justly in Judaea as elsewhere—had Rome for once been able to show herself tolerant of intolerance—the horrors attending the capture of Jerusalem might never have occurred.

But though the principle of nationality was not strong enough to threaten the unity of the Empire, it must not be forgotten that it was to a large extent that principle which lent to the German armies the force and enthusiasm which carried them to Rome in the first stage of the Civil War, and established Vitellius in power. At that time it was the practice of Rome to recruit her armies from the natives of the provinces or frontiers which they guarded. The

auxiliaries were wholly recruited in this manner ; to a large extent the legions also ; hence the success of the appeals made by Civilis to the Gauls and the Germans, from whose ranks so large a portion of the Roman army had been raised. The Roman Government did not fail to take a warning from the lessons of that war : henceforth the armies which guarded one part of the Empire were composed of men who had been recruited in another.

During the interval that elapsed between the death of Nero and the resolve of Vitellius to seize the Empire, several attempts at partial risings had been crushed. Nymphidius Sabinus, Prefect of the Praetorians, had sought to seize power in Rome ; Fonteius Capito had meditated an outbreak in Lower Germany (i. 7 and 37 ; iii. 62) ; and in Africa Clodius Macer went some length in the way of setting up an independent government, backed by a militant lady called Calvia Crispinilla, who formed the ambitious project of starving the people of Rome into submission by withholding the supplies of corn. Before long, however, we are told, 'Africa and her legions were ready to accept any kind of Emperor after their experience of a petty tyrant' (i. 7, 11, 73) ; and it soon became manifest that no stable or permanent government could be established at Rome except at the bidding, or with the consent, of one or other of the great armies of the Empire.

The elevation of Galba had been largely a matter of accident. In the last and worst days of Nero, when relief of some kind from tyranny and bad government was being anxiously looked for, and the Provinces were almost waiting for some General or army to make the first move, Galba had been

induced by Vindex to take part in the Gallic revolt, professing to take up arms as Legate of the Roman people and in the name of the Senate. The failure of that rising put Galba in some jeopardy; but on Nero's death, being the only General in actual revolt, he allowed himself to be proclaimed as Emperor, and was accepted by the people and the Senate.

But he had neither the character nor the military support that were needed to maintain him in so difficult a position. He failed even to secure the loyal support of the Praetorians in Rome; he had no other force to depend upon except the single legion which had accompanied him from Spain. He showed no kind of tact in dealing with matters in the city; he did nothing to conciliate, and everything to alienate, the great German armies. 'Those armies,' as Tacitus informs us, 'were in a most dangerous condition for so powerful a force, being at once irritated and alarmed; they were elated by their recent successes (against Vindex), and uneasy at having espoused the wrong cause' (i. 8).

In these circumstances, it was vain to expect that this great force would continue passively to accept the rule of Galba; and Galba threw away his last chance by the appointments which he made to the command of the German armies. To the Upper Army he appointed Hordeonius Flaccus, an imbecile invalid, who had no authority with his men, and whose feebleness contributed much to the disasters suffered afterwards at the hands of Civilis. And he made the fatal mistake of withdrawing from the Lower Army the capable and loyal Verginius, and substituting for him the sluggard and sensualist Vitellius, a man of

no character, ready to lend himself without demur to the promptings of his greedy and ambitious subordinates. The very feebleness of these men had no doubt recommended them to Galba, who thought to secure the inactivity of the armies which he distrusted by putting incompetent and easy-going generals in command.

The German army was devoted to Verginius. They pressed upon him more than once, we are told, the acceptance of the Empire; a similar offer had been made to him in Rome on behalf of the Illyrican armies before the death of Nero; and so great was his reputation that even after the battle of Bedriacum the Othonian soldiers, in their despair, begged him to assume the leadership. There must have been something great and commanding about a general to whom three armies in succession made similar proposals. Even when incensed against him by his refusal, the German army held him in high respect; 'The men admired him and respected him as they ever did, but they could not endure his having scorned them' (ii. 86).

It might seem, therefore, that Verginius was the one and only general who at that crisis could have succeeded peaceably to power, had he so chosen; and what we are told of him seems to suggest that he may be ranked as one of the rare instances in which a man has brought calamities on his country by declining advancement for himself. He lived on in Rome, honoured and unmolested, to his eighty-third year.

The recall of Verginius—the only man who could have kept the German army to its allegiance—made its revolt, and the war that followed it, inevitable. If Emperors henceforth were to be chosen

elsewhere than at Rome, and the Empire was to be thrown down as an apple of discord among the armies, a trial of strength between the greater armies was not to be avoided. The Praetorians were ready to fight desperately for their own privileges; the German army was jealous of those privileges; the armies of the Danube were no less jealous of the German. And besides these three great forces, there were the armies of the East behind, ready to make themselves heard when the right moment for their interposition should arrive.

One great difference between this Civil War and those which preceded it must be noticed. In the Civil Wars which ushered in the downfall of the Republic, the determining factor had been the personality, the genius, of the great leaders—Caesar, Antony, Augustus. In the Civil War of A.D. 69 the contest was more between the armies than between their Generals. Vitellius was impelled to the war by his subordinate officers and by his men. The Praetorians fought desperately against the Germans, but as much in behalf of themselves as for Otho. The Danubian armies had no General of their own great enough to put forward for Empire, but they were resolute in their hostility to the German army and its Generals; Vespasian himself was led on to assert himself quite as much by the enthusiasm of his men as by his own ambition. And much of the sanguinary fury which distinguished the whole war is to be explained by the fact that the battles were not only, or mainly, battles between the Generals, but between the armies also.

At the opening of the war, the great armies were distributed as follows :—

In Rome itself, at the outbreak of hostilities, Otho could count upon the enthusiastic support of his nine Praetorian Cohorts and seven Urban Cohorts, amounting in all to a force of 16,000 splendid troops. Added to these there was one whole legion within the city—the 1st (*Adiutrix*)—which had been recently levied by Nero out of the sailors of the fleet. There were also some special units in Rome, at Ostia, and on the Po, bringing up Otho's entire army to a possible total of 24,000 or 25,000 men.

Outside Italy, if we omit the forces in the minor provinces which were too small to take any direct part in the great war, there were three armies upon whose action everything depended.

(1) The German army, the most concentrated and the most prepared of the three, consisted of eight legions, seven of them distributed in the two provinces of Upper and Lower Germany, one stationed at Lyons. In marching for Rome, Vitellius had to leave behind him a certain number of troops to guard the frontier; but he was able to send over the Alps, by separate passes, two armies, of 40,000 men and 30,000 men respectively, under Valens and Caecina, while he himself followed in a leisurely fashion with a further force (*tota mole belli*) of uncertain strength.

(2) The armies of the Danube consisted of seven legions, two of which were stationed in Pannonia, three in Moesia, and two in Dalmatia. But whereas the German army was ready to march at once, the Danube armies were widely scattered and hard to concentrate (*nec vitiis nec viribus miscebantur*, i. 9). These legions embraced the cause of Otho; but their tardiness in arriving at the scene of action was the main cause of the Othonian disaster in the first battle of Bedriacum.

(3) Further away, and as yet in the background, lay the armies of the East—uncertain and expectant—consisting also of seven legions. Four of these were under Mucianus in Syria (one of which, however, the 3rd (*Gallica*) was now in Moesia), three in Judaea under Vespasian, who at that time, it was supposed, had all but brought the Judæan war to an end. Vespasian had acknowledged Galba as Emperor, and sent his son Titus to do him homage; but learning at Corinth of Galba's murder and the accession of Otho, Titus returned to his father to await developments. At this juncture the two Generals composed their differences; and Mucianus henceforth became the lieutenant and adviser of Vespasian. But things were not yet ripe for the Eastern army to intervene; and by the advice of his friends, Vespasian resolved to bide his time, and be ready to assert himself when the right moment should arrive.

As the narrative of Tacitus is somewhat intricate, being arranged, not with a view to facility of reference, as in a modern text-book, but with a view to literary and artistic effect, it may be well to give a brief summary of the salient facts of the year A.D. 69, so as to show at a glance how rapid was the course of events, how quickly the flame of war spread from one army to another, and how naturally, and almost inevitably, with the practical consent of the whole Empire, the principate fell into the hands of Vespasian. The *desideratum* of the Empire may appropriately be stated in the famous words with which Virgil opens the *Aeneid*—*Arma virumque*. It was not a question of 'Arms' only; there was also 'The Man' to be discovered; and of all the personages who are brought before us during the course of this Civil War,

Vespasian, though not an ideal sovereign, is the only one who stands out prominently as fitted not only to win, but to wear, the purple. Valens, Caecina, Antonius, were good soldiers, and fine captains; but not one of them was fit for the Imperial position.

In the last days of November, A.D. 68, Vitellius took up his command in Lower Germany. On the 2nd of January he was proclaimed Emperor by the Lower Army; by the Upper Army on the 3rd. With little or no delay, Valens and Caecina set out on their march for Italy: the former, at the head of 40,000 men, making for the Pass of the Mont Genève; the latter, with 30,000, taking the shorter route over the Great St. Bernard.

On the 15th of January took place the murder of Galba, and Otho was recognised as Emperor in Rome. The army of the Danube—that is, the legions of Pannonia, Moesia, and Dalmatia—espoused Otho's cause, and set out slowly for Italy, with a view to concentrating at Aquileia.

On the 14th of March Otho marched out from Rome at the head of his Praetorians and the Urban army. Too late to block the Alpine passes, he could only look to the Po to constitute his strategic line of defence. His main army took up its position at Bedriacum, to await the advent of the Danubian legions from Aquileia.

Meanwhile, in the early days of April, Caecina had reached the upper waters of the Po; repulsed in his attempted assault of Placentia, he occupied Cremona; and, while still single-handed, fought an unsuccessful battle at Locus Castorum, half-way between Cremona and Bedriacum.

After that battle he retired to Cremona, where he

was soon joined by Valens and his army. Instead of waiting for the arrival in force of the Danubian army, Otho insisted, against the advice of his best generals, upon hurrying on an action against the now united forces of the enemy, and on the 15th of April received a crushing defeat in what is known as the First Battle of Bedriacum. On the night following the reception of the news Otho committed suicide at Brixellum.

Vitellius received the news of his victory at Lyons, and made a leisurely advance, pursuing a debauched and desolating march through Italy. On the 24th of May he visited the battle-field of Bedriacum, and entered Rome in triumph, at the head of 60,000 men, towards the end of July.

Vitellius soon proved himself impossible as an Emperor. He knew how to manage neither his army, nor his Generals, nor the affairs of state; 'he avoided the public eye, and, like those sluggish animals which lie torpid when supplied with food, he secreted himself in shady gardens, dismissing with a like oblivion the past, the present, and the future' (iii. 36). The only good act recorded of his reign is that he hunted up one hundred and twenty persons who had petitioned Otho for rewards for having rendered signal assistance in the murder of Galba, and had them all executed (i. 44).

The Danubian army, of which only a small portion had fought at Bedriacum, was by no means ready to accept the new Emperor; and Vespasian in the East, urged on by his lieutenant Mucianus, and ready to take action at the first favourable moment, began to push on preparations for war. Assured of the adhesion of the Danubian legions, he was

proclaimed Emperor at Alexandria by his Egyptian legions upon the 1st of July, by the Judæan army upon the 3rd.

In the late summer or early autumn, the Danubian armies held a council of war at Poetovio. At that meeting, in spite of the scarcely veiled opposition of the three old and imbecile generals who were in chief command, the fiery eloquence of Antonius Primus, Legate of the 7th legion—the hero of the second phase of the war—carried all before it, and he succeeded in rousing the enthusiasm of the whole army in favour of instant war.

Adopting a vigorous offensive, Antonius moved instantly to Aquileia with a mere handful of troops; a few brilliant initial successes soon rallied behind him the whole of the Danubian legions. Establishing himself between Verona and the lower waters of the Adige, he was soon confronted by the superior army of Caecina, which had by this time marched out from Rome. But that army was paralysed by the treachery of its General, and by that of Lucilius Bassus, commander of the fleet of Ravenna. Left leaderless by these defections, all that this brave army could do was to march to Cremona, whither two of its legions—*Rapax* and *Italica*—had been sent on, either to guard that city or to await possible reinforcements from the North.

Antonius lost not a moment in pursuit. In two days he marched his whole force from Verona to Bedriacum, a distance of thirty-five miles, reaching that place on the 26th of October. On the 27th, in a battle close to the scene of the first battle of Bedriacum, he drove back to Cremona the two legions that were defending it. On that same evening, the

whole of the Vitellian army had arrived in Cremona, having marched, at the least, a hundred miles in four days. On that same day they had accomplished a march of thirty miles ; but all footsore and weary as they were, they insisted on being led out without a moment's delay to fight the army of Antonius. And then ensued that terrible night conflict, so vividly described by our historian, which ended in the utter defeat of the Vitellian army and the sack of Cremona. That defeat decided the fate of the Roman Empire ; it secured the Principate for Vespasian, without his having struck one blow on his own behalf, and thus raised to power the only man in the Roman world who seemed likely to prove worthy of the Imperial place when he had attained to it.

Though robbed of the rewards which he might have claimed for his successes—partly by his own overbearing pride, partly by the jealousy of Mucianus—Antonius stands out as the one hero of the Civil War, the only General who during this year of battles displayed powers of leadership and strategy of a high order. The qualities of the ordinary legionary soldier stand out conspicuous during all these campaigns. We cannot but admire his splendid courage and steadfastness to the last ; his powers of marching and enduring fatigue ; and, on the whole, even in those adverse moments when discipline was struggling with indiscipline, his loyalty to the old traditions of the service. Nor can we fail to recognise the fine organisation by which those large armies were kept together and furnished with supplies during marches hundreds of miles long, and over difficult mountain passes, ready for battle at any moment. But except in the case of the campaign

ending in the capture of Cremona, few signs of higher generalship are to be observed; it was sheer brute fighting that decided the issues of the battles.

The victory at Cremona saved the State from further and possibly greater calamities. Had the Vitellians won that battle, the war might have been indefinitely prolonged. There was still the new force of Praetorians, mostly Germans, to be reckoned with; fresh auxiliaries might have come up from Gaul, Spain, and Britain. As it was, it took the Flavians two whole months to make their way to Rome. They were short of supplies; they suffered severely in crossing the Apennines in wintry weather; their leaders, now that Mucianus had appeared on the scene, were at cross purposes with one another; and thus the advance to Rome was unhappily delayed till it was too late to avert the horrors and disasters which attended the capture of the city. Those disasters form the subject-matter of some of the most splendid passages of Tacitus. The siege, the storming, and burning of the Capitol by the Vitellians while the Flavian army was almost within sight of Rome; the bursting into the city of the conquering Flavians; the terrible conflicts, first in the Campus Martius, and then in the streets, into which the remnant of the Vitellians were beaten back to be hounded to death amid the jeers of a mob indifferent to both sides alike; the last heroic but hopeless defence of the Praetorian camp by the Vitellian soldiers, who perished to a man, with their faces to the foe; the humiliating spectacle of Vitellius leaving the Palace after his pretended abdication, and then forced by the populace to return to it; the still more ignominious and revolting circumstances

of his death, and of the outrages on his person which preceded it;—such were the scenes amid which the great Civil War came to a close, and to which Tacitus has given immortality by the splendour of his description of them.

Thus ends the story of the great Civil War of the year A.D. 69—the year of four Emperors—as told by Tacitus in Books I., II., and III. of his Histories. Thus fell Vitellius—the most contemptible of all occupants of an Imperial position—after an inglorious reign of one year all but eleven days. The Civil War was over; and there was no one left to dispute the claim of Vespasian to the supreme place. The acquiescent Senate at once voted him all the usual powers and honours of the Principate; but he did not as yet present himself upon the scene, content to remain with his own legions in the East.

The Consulship was assumed in absence by Vespasian and his eldest son Titus upon the 1st of January; but all power was exercised in their name by Mucianus. It will be remembered how Tacitus has described Vespasian as a rough sturdy soldier, and Mucianus as 'readier of speech, and more a man of affairs'; adding the shrewd comment that 'the virtues of the two men, without the faults of either, would have made an admirable temperament for an Emperor' (ii. 5). In uttering this reflection the historian was but making a forecast of what actually occurred. It was precisely the combination of the soldier with the statesman—though combined, as it happened, in different persons—that was needed at that moment to secure peace and satisfaction to the Roman world.

Of the doings within the city after the accession

of Vespasian we hear but little during the remaining portion of the Histories. We have some interesting debates in the Senate, which give Tacitus an opportunity of pronouncing a splendid eulogium on his Stoical hero Helvidius Priscus, and of giving us a sample of the ferocious eloquence with which the hated delators conducted their controversies in the Senate. We have also a charming account of the laying of the foundation stone of the new Capitoline Temple upon the 21st of June, A.D. 70 (iv. 53).

But the main part of Books IV. and V. is taken up with an account of the memorable rising of Civilis in the region of the Rhine; while in the opening chapters of Book V. we have that account of the history and character of the Jews—so curiously accurate in parts, so cruelly prejudiced as a whole—with which Tacitus prefaced his story of the siege and capture of Jerusalem.

The rising of Civilis has a twofold interest, both as being in itself a piece of romantic adventure, and also because it was the last serious attempt from within the Empire to throw off the yoke of Rome. The story of the war, as told by Tacitus, is not very easy to follow. Neither his geography nor his military operations are at all times intelligible. He was more interested in the moral and political aspects of the rebellion than in its military details; and Mr. Bernard Henderson has done a good work in subjecting his narrative to a rigid analysis, and presenting us with a clear and spirited account of the whole campaign.¹

Mr. Henderson finds fault with the speeches inserted by Tacitus into the narrative of the war. But

¹ *Civil War and Rebellion*, pp. 231-333.

those speeches enable us to grasp the situation as it was understood in Rome; and there is one speech which gives us the key to the political standpoint of Tacitus himself. When the *Annals* were first re-discovered, Tacitus was hailed as a champion of liberty. It was generally taken for granted that his sympathies were all with the ideals of old Republican Rome: even Napoleon could not forbear from condemning Tacitus as the foe of all order and authority.¹ But nothing could be further from the mark than to suppose that he had any hankering for a return to republican institutions.

In the fine speech which Cerialis addressed to the Treveri and the Lingones (iv. 73-74) we cannot doubt that the historian is giving vent to his own views on the Empire and its mission. In that speech he declares his faith in the justice and endurance of Roman rule; he knows of no distinction between Empire and Republic. 'For eight hundred years,' he tells us, 'Rome had been training and preparing herself for the work which she alone could do—to keep the peace among the nations. She entered Gaul for no selfish ends of her own; it was to save the Gauls from being overrun and despoiled by the Germans. Tyranny might from time to time break out in Rome; but it was only in Rome that its scourging hand was felt, and when it came, it had to be endured like famine or flood, or any other natural calamity. Rome gave liberty to her peoples, preserving them from tyrants of their own, opening up to them her privileges, and exacting from them no more tribute than was needed to make sure of their own defence.'

Such were the views of Tacitus. He proclaims

¹ See Introduction to Vol. I. of this edition, pp. xxv. to xxvii.

himself an uncompromising Imperialist. He surely would have sympathised with the Greek historian Dion Cassius when he declared that his ideal of human happiness was that the whole world should be governed by the divinely-appointed State of Rome. He saw that it was the business of Rome, by means of her strong army, to keep the peace of the world ; and he may well have had a vision of that *Pax Romana* which was destined to last for centuries, and to preserve intact those treasures of the old world out of which, in due time, were to be reconstructed, in so large a measure, the laws, the politics, and the civilisation of the new.

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS.

BOOK I.

JANUARY TO MARCH, A.D. 69.

CHAP. 1. Purpose of this history—2-3. Calamitous character of the times—4-11. Feeling in the city, among the Praetorians, and in the provincial armies—12-14. Revolt of Upper German army; Galba proposes Piso for adoption—15-16. Galba's speech—17-19. The adoption is coldly received—20. Nero's benefactions revoked—21-28. Ambitious projects of Otho, furthered by dependants, astrologers and private soldiers—27-29. The conspiracy of January 15th; Otho saluted as Emperor—29-30. Galba hesitates; Piso addresses his Cohort—31-33. Feeble consultations among Galba's friends; general defection of the soldiers—34-35. Galba reaches the Forum—36. Otho enthusiastically received in the camp—37-38. His speech to the soldiers—39-44. Murder of Galba, Piso, and Titus Vinius in the Forum—45-46. Otho conciliates the soldiers—47. He receives imperial powers from the Senate—48. Characters of Piso and T. Vinius—49. Character of Galba—50-51. Rising of Vitellius in Germany, and its causes—52-53. Valens and Caecina urge him to assume the Empire—54-55. The legions ready to support him, though they have already sworn allegiance to Galba—56-57. Vitellius saluted as Emperor by both German armies—58-59. Measures taken by Vitellius; adhesions to his cause—60. Troubles in Britain—61-62. Valens and Caecina appointed to march into Italy—63. Shameful behaviour of the army of Valens—64. Unruly conduct of the Batavians—65-66. Feud between Lyons and Vienne; the Viennese narrowly escape destruction—67. Cruel march of Caecina—68-69. In the end the Helvetii are spared—70. Caecina crosses the Pennines in mid-winter, and sends on auxiliaries into Italy—71-73. Otho's conduct in Rome; he pardons Marius Celsus, orders Tigellinus to commit suicide, and screens Calvia Crispinilla—74-75. Vain negotiations between Otho and Vitellius—76. Distribution of the armies—77-78. Allotment of honours and favours—79. Incursion and defeat of the Rhoxolani—80. Insane military outbreak in Rome,—81-82. with

difficulty repressed by Otho—83-84. Otho's speech to the Praetorians—85. Alarm in the city—86. List of prodigies—a disastrous inundation—87. Otho projects a naval raid on Narbonese Gaul,—88-89. and prepares for war—90. On the 14th of March he sets out from Rome, leaving his brother in charge of the city.

BOOK II.

MARCH TO AUGUST, A.D. 69.

CHAPS. 1-2. Vespasian and Titus in the East—3-4. Titus visits the Temple of Paphian Venus—Forces of the Eastern army—5-6. Relation of Mucianus to Vespasian; their armies keen, but slow to move—7. They resolve to bide their time—8-9. Appearance and suppression of a pretended Nero—10. Impeachment of Annius Faustus—11. March of Otho; the Danubian armies declare in his favour—12-13. The raid on Narbonese Gaul—14-15. The Vitellians worsted—16. Attempt of Decumus Pacarius in Corsica—17. Caecina arrives at Cremona—18-22. He vainly attempts to assault Placentia—23. Success of the Othonians near Cremona under Martius Macer—24-26. Paulinus and Celsus win a battle at 'The Castors'—27-29. Recent misbehaviour of the Batavians under Valens—30-31. Caecina and Valens join forces at Cremona—32-33. Council of war among the Othonian generals; the advice of Suetonius Paulinus rejected—34-36. Feint of crossing the Po made by the Vitellians; the Othonians defeated in a river battle—37. Unlikely story that both armies desired an agreement—38. Love of power the cause of all political troubles—39. The Othonian army marches out from Bedriacum,—40-44. and suffers a terrible defeat near Cremona—45. Surrender of the whole Othonian army—46-47. Otho refuses to continue the war; his intrepid speech,—48-49. suicide and burial—50. His origin and career—51. Verginius refuses to assume the Empire; amnesty granted—52. Abject position of Senators at Mutina—53. Their fears and quarrels—54. False report that Otho was still alive—55. Imperial powers voted to Vitellius—56. Desolating march of the Vitellians—57. Vitellius commends his army—58. Adhesion of the two Mauretians—59-60. Murder of Albinus and Asinius Pollio; proceedings of Vitellius at Lyons—61. Rising of Mariccus—62. Gluttony of Vitellius—63. He orders the death of Dolabella—64. Conduct of Triaria and Galeria compared—65. Treatment of Cluvius Rufus and Trebellius—66-69. Dispersal of the troops; military riots at Turin and Ticinum—70. Vitellius visits the battle-field of Bedriacum—71. His dissolute progress—72. An impostor is caught and punished—73. The Eastern army takes oath of allegiance—74. Yet Vespasian prepares for war—75. His doubts and anxieties—76-77. He is encouraged by Mucianus,—78. and by prophecies—79-81. He is proclaimed Emperor at

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BOOK III.

SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER, A.D. 69.

CHAPS. 1-3. Council of war at Poetovio—Antonius Primus carries all before him—4-5. Lethargy of the Generals; measures of precaution—6. Antonius, supported by Cornelius Fuscus and Arrius Varus, rapidly invades Italy—7-8. His initial successes; he occupies Verona—9. Caecina at Hostilia; correspondence between the Generals—10-11. Attacks upon Flavianus and Aponius—12-13. Treachery of Lucilius Bassus and Caecina; that of Caecina repudiated by the army—14-15. The Vitellians march for Cremona; Antonius instantly starts in pursuit—16-18. He encounters the Vitellians near Bedriacum, and drives back the Legions *Italica* and *Rapax* to Cremona—19-20. The men demand to be led at once against Cremona—21-25. That same night the whole Vitellian army comes up; terrible night battle, in which the Vitellians are defeated—26-33. Capture of the camp, and sack of Cremona—34. History of the city—35. The Vitellian army dispersed; news of the victory circulated—36-37. Slothful conduct of Vitellius—38-39. Murder of Junius Blaesus—40-43. Fruitless march of Valens to Ariminum; he escapes over the Apennines, and is finally captured in the Stoechades—44. Spain, Gaul, and Britain come over to Vespasian—45-46. Troubles in Britain, in Germany, and with the Dacians—47-48. Rising of Anicetus; Vespasian at Alexandria—49. Reckless conduct of Antonius—50-52. March of the Flavians to Rome—53. Recriminations between Antonius and Mucianus—54-56. Supineness of Vitellius; he joins the camp at Mevania, and leaves it again—57-58. Fleet at Misenum brought over to Vespasian; Lucius Vitellius sent to Campania—59-60. The Flavians cross the Apennines—61. Desertions among the Vitellians—62. Death of Valens; his character—63. Surrender of the Flavians—64-65. Negotiations between Flavius Sabinus and Vitellius—66-67. Vitellius turns a deaf ear to manly counsels—68. He leaves the Palace, and returns to it—69. Sabinus occupies the Capitol,—70. where he is besieged—71-72. Burning of the Capitoline Temple; its history—73-75. The Capitol stormed; Domitian

escapes; Sabinus put to death; his character—76-77. Operations in Latium and Campania—78-79. Delay of the Flavians in reaching Rome—80. Repulse of Petilius Cerialis—81. Mission of Musonius Rufus and the Vestal Virgins—82-83. The Flavians force their way into the city; callousness of the populace—84-85. Storming of the Praetorian Camp; piteous death of Vitellius—86. His character; Domitian saluted as Caesar.

BOOK IV.

A.D. 69 AND PART OF 70.

CHAP. 1. State of things in Rome—2. Surrender and death of Lucius Vitellius—3. Imperial powers conferred upon Vespasian—4. Other honours bestowed—5-6. Helvidius Priscus attacks Thræsea's accuser; his noble character—7-8. Dispute between Helvidius and Eprius Marcellus—9-10. Other doings in the Senate—11. Mucianus enters Rome; several deaths follow—12-13. Disasters in Germany; rising of the Batavians under Civilis—14-15. His speech and machinations—16-17. He gains a victory and rouses both Germans and Gauls—18-19. Apathy of Hordeonius; desertion of the auxiliaries—20-22. Defeat of Romans; legions besieged in Vetera—23. Assault on Vetera fails—24-25. Wrath of the soldiers against Hordeonius; march to Cologne—26-27. Vocula takes command; the army reaches Novaesium; Vocula quells mutiny—28-30. Failure of fresh assaults against Vetera—31-33. News of Cremona arrives; despatches from Antonius; activity of Civilis; Vocula saved from defeat near Asciburgium—34-35. Engagements outside Vetera; reverse to convoy—36. Insubordination of legions; murder of Hordeonius—37. Vocula at Mogontiacum—38-39. Affairs in Rome; Mucianus jealous of Antonius—40. Speech of Domitian; doings in the Senate—41. Form of oath adopted by Senate—42-43. Wrangling in the Senate—44. Discouraged by Mucianus—45. Outrage at Sena Julia—46. Threatened mutiny of Praetorians—47. Measures passed by Senate—48-50. Disturbances in Africa; Lucius Piso murdered; expedition against the Lepcitani—51-52. Doings of Vespasian and Titus—53. Rebuilding of the Capitol—54-55. War aggravated in Gaul and Germany; outbreak of Gallic tribes—56. Treachery of Classicus and Tutor—57. Vocula retreats to Novaesium,—58. makes a last appeal to his men,—59. and is murdered—60. Vetera surrenders; the men treacherously slain—61. Murder of the Legate Lupercus—62. Auxiliaries and 1st Legion ordered to Trèves—63-65. Proposal of the Tencteri to destroy Cologne is rejected—66. Defeat of Claudius Labeo—67. Julius Sabinus defeated by the Sequani—68. Mucianus equips army for German war—69-70. Discord of Gallic tribes; army from Rome arrives—71-72. Successes of Cerialis; he prevents the destruction of Trèves—73-74. His address to the Treveri and Lingones—75-76. Overtures from

Civilis; division of opinion among the Germans—77. Cerialis surprised; he retrieves the day,—78. and wins a further battle,—79. but meets with some reverses. Massacre of Germans at Cologne—80. Antonius coolly received by Vespasian—81. Vespasian effects cures—82. His vision in the Temple of Serapis—83—84. How that God was brought to Egypt—85—86. Mucianus and Domitian set out for the war; retirement of Domitian.

BOOK V.

PART OF A.D. 70.

CHAP. 1. Titus in command of the Judæan war—2. Origin of the Jews—3. Plague in Egypt; Moses finds water—4. He institutes strange practices,—5. partly excusable, partly revolting—6. Belief in only one God—7. Account of the country and its products—8—10. Jerusalem and its Temple; past history of the Jews—11—12. Titus encamps outside the walls; fortifications of the City and the Temple—13. Various prodigies and prophecies—14—18. Civilis at Vetera. Cerialis engages him on marshy ground; his harangue and victory—19. Civilis destroys the dam across the Rhine,—20—21. and makes a fourfold attack on Roman camps—22. Cerialis and his fleet surprised; he narrowly escapes capture—23. Both fleets pass each other in review—24—25. Proposals of peace—26. Cerialis and Civilis meet on a broken bridge; speech of Civilis.

THE HISTORIES OF TACITUS.

BOOK I.

I THIS History begins with the second Consulship of Servius Galba, and the first of Titus Vinius.¹ The preceding eight hundred and twenty years² from the founding of the city have been chronicled by many

The period and purpose of this History.

¹ Tacitus begins the *Histories* from the 1st of January, A.D. 69. It is unfortunate for us that he should have begun just at this point, and so omitted all detailed account of the important events which took place in the preceding year. Nero had put an end to himself on the 9th of June, A.D. 68; and Galba, proclaimed 'Imperator' by his legion in Spain on April 3^d, was invested with imperial power by the Senate immediately after Nero's death, though he did not actually enter Rome till towards the end of the year. We thus hear nothing of the gradual simmering of discontent throughout the provinces and the legions both before and after Nero's death, or of the steps by which that discontent was brought to a head. We hear nothing of the rising of Vindex in Gaul, which was a most important movement, and is often cursorily alluded to in the *Histories* as having had great effect upon the attitude both of the Gauls and Germans during the civil war, as also during the rising of Civilis (i. 16, 51, 53; iv. 17, 57, 69, etc.). We should also have liked to hear more of Verginius, and of the circumstances under which he was offered, and declined, the Empire. Had Tacitus con-

templated writing the *Annals* at the time when he published the *Histories*, we could have understood his leaving the events of the year 68 for the former work; but we see from the end of this chapter that he had no such intention at this time. As it is, we can only suppose that he had made up his mind not to touch upon Nero's reign, and that the annalistic form of his work required him to begin it with the opening of a year.

The Emperor Lucius Sulpicius Servius Galba had been consul for the first time in the year A.D. 33, when he was only 36 years of age. The name Galba was borne by a branch of the patrician gens *Sulpicia*, which had played an important part in public life since the third century B.C., had enjoyed many consulships, and amassed great wealth. For Galba's character and previous career see chap. 49 and n.

Titus Vinius had been a Legate of Galba's. He is represented by Tac. as the evil genius of Galba's reign. See further n. on chap. 6, where he is called *detrimentum mortalium*.

² The exact number of years from the foundation of the city (B.C. 753) to A.D. 69 would be 822.

who wrote with equal eloquence and freedom so long as the history of the Roman people was their theme; but when Actium¹ had been fought, and the interests of peace required that all power² should be centred in one man, those great writers wrote no more,³ and historical truth was violated in divers ways: at first, from men's ignorance⁴ of public affairs, as though they concerned them not; afterwards, by the spirit of adulation, or of hatred towards our rulers—the hostility of some, the servility of others, shutting out all regard for posterity.⁵ But while a writer's partiality soon revolts the reader, detraction and malignity are drunk in with greedy ears: for whereas the former is open to the foul charge of sycophancy, the latter makes a false show of liberty.

I myself had no knowledge of Galba, Otho, or

My own relation to

¹ Here Tacitus takes the common-sense view of dating the establishment of the Empire from the battle of Actium, September 2, B.C. 31, when the defeat and death of Antony left Octavianus undisputed master of Rome. He takes no notice either of the so-called 'Restoration of the Republic,' which Augustus boasted that he had effected in B.C. 27 (*Monumentum Ancyranum*, vi. 13), or of the final development of the Principate as established B.C. 23 (see n. on Ann. i. 2).

² Our word 'power' scarcely does justice to the Latin word *potentia* here used, which must be carefully distinguished from *potestas*. *Potestas* is used of any legal or regularly constituted authority; *potentia* carries with it the idea of something excessive or overweening, and is generally used in a bad sense, whether to denote arbitrary power above the law, or any undue influence resting on rank, wealth, or favour. Thus in Ann. i. 1 the word is used of the extra-constitutional powers exercised by Pompey and Crassus in the Triumvirate.

³ What is meant is that after the establishment of the Empire the succession of great historians came to an

end; frightened off, as he tells us in Ann. i. 1, by the growing adulation of the times. In that same chap. he declares that all histories of the reigns of Tiberius, Gaius, Claudius, and Nero—that is, the whole period covered by the *Annals*—*florētibus ipsis ob metum falsae, postquam occiderant, recentibus odiis compositae sunt*.

⁴ *Inscitia* here seems to mean more than mere ignorance; it implies a want of right judgment, the result of imperfect knowledge. Thus in chap. 90, 7 Otho blames the *inscitia*, rather than the *audacia*, of the revolting legions; and in ii. 77 Mucianus speaks of the *inscitia* of Vitellius, meaning thereby his want of statesmanship and governing capacity.

⁵ The main function of History, according to Tac., was to be a guide and warning to posterity; no one therefore could be ranked as an historian in the proper sense who had no *cura posteritatis*:—'For I deem it to be the chief function of history to rescue merit from oblivion, and to hold up before evil words and evil deeds the terror of the reprobation of posterity' (Ann. iii. 65).

different
Emperors.

Vitellius, in the way of either injury or favour. That I received my first appointment to office from Vespasian,¹ was promoted by Titus, and raised still further by Domitian, I cannot deny; but he who claims to keep truth inviolate² must speak of no man with either hate or favour.³ Should life last me, I reserve for my old age the reign of the Divine⁴ Nerva and the rule of Trajan,⁵ a richer and less perilous field⁶—the rare happiness of these times permitting men to think what they please, and to say what they think.

2 I enter upon a time rich in catastrophes, full of The period
is one rich

¹ Tac. was a lad of 14 or 15 years of age at the time when the *Histories* begin. The extraordinary interest of the whole work is enhanced by the fact that he must have been himself a witness of many of the most remarkable scenes which he describes, and may have heard of everything that he relates from the mouths of eye-witnesses. See the interesting development of this point by Spooner in his *Introd.*, pp. 11-19.

² The phrase *incorrupta fides* comes from Horace, who uses it in a somewhat different sense to describe the spotless integrity of Quintilius (*Incorrupta fides nudaque veritas*, *Od.* i. 24, 7). Here it is used of the absolute fidelity of the historian, as when Livy applies *incorruptus* to original historical documents, inscriptions, and the like, whose genuineness cannot be disputed.

³ Thus Tac. lays claim for himself to absolute impartiality. In opening the *Annals* (i. 1) he makes the same claim: he undertakes to write *sine ira et studio quorum causas procul habeo*. It is not known for certain which were the offices bestowed on Tac. by Vespasian and Titus; but as he seems to have pursued the usual course of public service, we may take it for granted that he began by the quaestorship, and was promoted by Titus to the *curule aedileship*. In *Ann.* xi. 11 he informs us that he was praetor and quindecimvir sacrorum in the year A.D. 88, in both of which capacities he had to take part—and as praetor to preside—at the

Secular games celebrated by Domitian in that year.

⁴ The application of the term *divus* to Nerva shows that the *Histories* were published after the death of that Emperor (Jan. 27, A.D. 98), and at some time, probably not very long, after the accession of Trajan. This passage also shows that Tac. had not at this time contemplated the *Annals*, but was intending to continue the *Histories* into the reigns of Nerva and Trajan. What induced him to change his mind and to turn his attention to the earlier period, A.D. 14 to 68, is not known.

⁵ This is one of the few passages—perhaps the only passage—in which Tac. appears to draw a contrast between the words *principatus* and *imperium*. Elsewhere he uses the terms *princeps* and *imperator* indiscriminately, or for the sake of variety only. See especially chap. 37 and n., where in the same context Otho speaks of himself first as *princeps* and then as *imperator*. In the present passage the milder peaceful reign of Nerva is described as a *principatus*, while *imperium* is used in reference to the warlike reign of Trajan. In ii. 80, 6, after the soldiers have saluted Vespasian as '*Imperator*,' they proceed to heap on him the titles *Caesarem et Augustum et omnia principatus vocabula*.

⁶ 'Richer,' because of the military exploits of Trajan; 'less perilous' for the historian, because of the greater lenity of those Emperors and their discouragement of delation.

in great
events and
great
calamities.

fierce battles and civic strife,¹ a time when even peace had horrors of its own;² a time during which four Emperors³ perished by the sword; in which there were three Civil Wars,⁴ several foreign wars, and some that partook of both characters;⁵ a time of good fortune in the East, and of disaster in the West: a time when Illyricum⁶ was in revolt, Gaul wavering⁷

¹ The two opening chapters of the *Histories* should be compared with those of the *Annals*. In each case a short chapter of retrospect, ending with a statement of the purpose and limits of the work begun, with an emphatic promise of truthfulness, is followed in the second chapter by an elaborate and carefully constructed passage which serves as an introduction to the whole work. In Ann. i. 2 we have, in one highly artistic period, a masterly review of the causes which led to the placing of supreme power in the hands of Augustus; in Hist. i. 2 we have in short, burning sentences an equally elaborate and more rhetorical, though not less exact, picture of the horrors which are to be narrated in the *Histories*. It may be doubted whether all literature contains in so short a space so brilliant, and yet so gloomy, a summary of great events.

² Here, as often elsewhere, the word *saevus* refers to the judicial cruelty of the delations, the special reference being to the prosecutions at the close of Domitian's reign which are so forcibly described in the *Agricola* (chap. 2). So in chap. 50 the words *saeva pax* refer to the accusations carried on in a time of peace under Nero.

³ It seems pretty clear that the four Emperors *ferro interempti* were Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and Domitian (murdered by the freedman Stephanus, A.D. 96). It would be tempting to suppose that Nero's was one of the deaths referred to, which would certainly suggest itself along with the three others as one of the most tragic of the period. But the words *opus ingredior*, and the promise in chap. 1 to include the reign of Domitian, seem to preclude that supposition.

⁴ If we could suppose Nero to be one of the four Emperors slain, then 'the three civil wars' must include that between Nero and Galba, the other two being those between Otho and Vitellius, and between Vitellius and

Vespasian respectively. The close connexion of these three wars makes it less probable that the reference, as most editors suppose, is to an unimportant rising of L. Antonius, commander in Upper Germany, against Domitian in A.D. 88 (Suet. Dom. 6; Dio. lxxvii. 11).

⁵ This surely is the meaning of *permixta*, the wars specially referred to being those with Civilis and the Jews. Godley and Heraeus take the words to mean 'contemporary,' in reference to the incursion of the Rhoxolani (i. 79). But that meaning can hardly be got out of the word, nor was that incursion important enough to suit this passage.

⁶ The reference here is to the conduct of the legions in Dalmatia (the S. province of Illyricum), Moesia, and Pannonia, which are grouped together (see i. 76) under the general name of Illyricum. The attitude of these legions proved of crucial importance during the civil war. They embraced the cause of Otho first, and that of Vespasian afterwards. Had Otho only waited for their arrival in Italy before committing his army to the battle of Bedriacum, he would have been strong enough to prevent Vitellius from reaching Rome, and the whole course of the subsequent history might have been changed.

⁷ The uneasy temper of the Gallic tribes, and their hopes of regaining their independence, were the immediate cause of Nero's downfall, and of the civil wars that followed: 'Gallic nationalism was an ever-present peril to the Romans for more than a century after the death of its greatest champion' (Henderson's *Civil War*, p. 242). And it was the rising of Gallic tribes under Vindex—himself a Gaul who had attained to high command in the Roman army—that first opened the eyes of the Roman world to the idea that 'Emperors might be made elsewhere than in Rome.' As it happened, Vindex found himself unable to carry on the revolt

in her allegiance, Britain subdued and forthwith abandoned¹; when the Sarmatian² and Suebish³ nations were in arms against us; when the Dacians⁴ gained glory alike from defeats inflicted and sustained, and when even Parthia was nearly moved to arms by a vain pretender to the name of Nero.⁵ Italy was smitten by calamities unknown before, or recurring after many generations, which swallowed up or overwhelmed cities⁶ in the fairest regions of

single-handed, and came to terms with Galba, who seems to have made certain concessions to the rebellious Gauls before they were overwhelmed by the German army of Verginius. Later in the year, as we shall see, Civilis played for the complicity of the Gauls in his revolt by holding out to them the prospect of establishing a Gallic Empire. The last serious revolt before this one against Roman authority had been made by Gallic tribes in A.D. 21, by the Treveri under Florus and the Aedui under Sacrovir (Ann. iii. 40-46).

¹ The allusion is to the victorious march of Agricola ending in the famous battle of *Mons Grampius* or *Graupius* by which Caledonia seemed to have been conquered. Tac. speaks of Britain having been 'abandoned' because no attempt was made to keep possession of Caledonia after that battle.

² For the irruption into Moesia of the Sarmatian tribe Rhoxolani, and their defeat by the 3rd Legion, see chap. 79. 'Sarmatian' is a general name given to the wild tribes inhabiting the S. parts of Modern Russia, N. of the Dacians and the Black Sea. Suet. records that Domitian was obliged to retaliate upon the Sarmatians, who had cut up an entire legion. He also undertook two expeditions against the Dacians, for which he celebrated a triumph.

³ The Suebi inhabited in a roving manner great parts of SE. Germany, especially what is now Bohemia. The Romans had to watch their proceedings on the Danube frontier, trying to turn their intestine divisions to account, and finding refuge for their kings and followers when expelled from their own country (Ann. ii. 44-46, 63, and xii. 29-30).

⁴ The Dacians were a real source of anxiety when the civil war drained

Moesia of its troops. When the Flavians and Vitellians were fighting it out in Lombardy, the Dacians destroyed the winter quarters of the auxiliaries, and took possession of both banks of the Danube. Tac. mentions it as a special instance of the *fortuna populi Romani* that Mucianus happened to be there at that moment, bringing up the rear of Vespasian's army from the east (iii. 46). In the *Agricola* he speaks of the defeats which disgraced Domitian's reign: *tot exercitus in Moesia Daciaque et Germania et Pannonia temeritate aut per ignaviam ducum amissi . . . nec iam de limite imperii sed de hibernis legionum et possessione dubitatum* (chap. 41).

⁵ Twenty years after this date an upstart arose pretending to be Nero: he received considerable support from the Parthians (Suet. Nero 57). Tac. gives the story of a similar pretender in this same year (ii. 8). The career of another impostor, pretending to be Scribonianus Camerinus, is narrated in ii. 72.

⁶ The allusion is to the famous eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in A.D. 79, which buried Herculaneum and Pompeii, and in which Pliny the elder fell a victim to his scientific ardour. The word *haustae*, 'swallowed up,' might imply that some villages had been washed out by an in-rushing sea, as has happened after other earthquakes; but no other writer mentions such an event. The word might refer to the action of either fire, earth, or water. In four passages Tac. uses the word of destruction by fire; more frequently he uses it in reference to water. In Ann. ii. 47 we have *ductis terris hauriebantur*, and Pliny, N. H. xxxvi. 15, 24, § 119, has *hauriri urbes terrae hiatiibus*. The younger Pliny (Epp. vi. 16) speaks of encroachment of land upon the sea at the time of the earthquake, and Tac. probably

Campania.¹ Rome was devastated by fires which destroyed her most ancient Temples; the Capitol itself was burnt down by the hands of citizens.² I shall have to tell of holy rites profaned, of adulteries in high places,³ of seas crowded with exiles, of islands stained with blood,⁴ and of horrors in the city greater still,⁵ where high birth, wealth, the acceptance of office, or the refusal of it,⁶ were accounted crimes, and where virtue proved the surest road to death.

Nor were the rewards of accusers less hateful than their villainies: some gained Consulships and Priesthoods as their spoils, some Procuratorships,⁷ others influence of a more secret kind,⁸ overturning everything, carrying all before them, by the forces of hate and terror.⁹ Slaves were bribed to betray their masters, clients their patrons; those who had no enemies were ruined by their friends.¹⁰

The crimes and the rewards of informers.

meant to leave it open to which of the three agencies the 'swallowing up' was due.

¹ The coast places of Campania were the great pleasure haunts of the Romans. Tac. always speaks of Campania with an admiration which seems due partly to its fertility, partly to the beauty of its scenery. Here it is *ora fecundissima*: in iii. 66, we have *beatos Campaniæ sinus*.

² Dio lxxvi. 24 gives an account of a fire which ravaged the city in A.D. 80, destroying many of the principal buildings. The famous burning of the Capitoline Temple by the Vitellians is related in iii. 71.

³ The phrase *magna adulteria* undoubtedly refers to the high station of the offenders, not, as some suppose, to the grossness of the offence: *fructus amicitiae magnæ cibus*, says Juv. v. 14, meaning 'friendship with the great.' So *insignes amicitias* in chap. 10, 3.

⁴ The rocky islands in the Aegean, or those off the coast of Italy, were the usual prisons selected for political offenders. Our ancestors were only following the example of the Romans when they confined Napoleon in Elba and St. Helena.

⁵ Referring to the delations under Domitian.

⁶ Dio says that one of the reasons why Domitian put Herennius Senecio to death was that after holding the quaestorship he declined to stand for any public office.

⁷ A procuratorship was a very lucrative office. In every province there was a *procurator fisci* who managed the Emperor's revenues; in smaller provinces (as Pontius Pilate in Judæa) the procurator exercised the authority of a governor. How profitable such posts might be is seen from Ann. xvi. 17, where we are told that Seneca's brother Mela abstained from seeking public office hoping 'to find a shorter road to wealth by holding procuratorships for the Emperor's private affairs.' See nn. on Ann. ii. 56 and iv. 6, 5.

⁸ Meaning influence acquired by favourites who were within the inmost circle of the Emperor's friends.

⁹ The words *odio et terrore* seem used in a wide sense of the atmosphere of hate and terror created throughout the community by the proceedings and the rewards of the informers.

¹⁰ We can hardly doubt that Tacitus had here in his mind the famous case

3 And yet the age was not so barren of all virtue as not to exhibit some noble examples. Mothers followed their sons, wives their husbands,¹ into exile; some kinsmen showed courage, some sons-in-law² were faithful; there were slaves who held out staunchly even against torture,³ and illustrious men who bore their doom with fortitude;⁴ there were death-scenes as noble as those celebrated by antiquity.

Yet the age was not destitute of virtues.

And in addition to these manifold disasters in human affairs, there were prodigies in earth and sky; there were warnings from lightning, there were presages for the future, some of good, some of evil, some obscure, some not to be misunderstood: for never did the people of Rome endure calamities more grievous, never witness more convincing proof that the Gods care much for our chastisement, for our happiness not at all.⁵

Warnings given by prodigies.

of Barea Soranus, though it occurred before the period when the *Histories* begin. Barea Soranus was a distinguished Stoic who had been *cos. suf.* in A.D. 52. In A.D. 66 he was included in the prosecution directed against Thræsea Paetus, when the principal witness against him was P. Egnatius Celer, himself a Stoic philosopher and a teacher of Soranus. See below, iv. 7, and n.

¹ Fannia twice followed her husband Helvidius Priscus into exile (Plin. Epp. vii. 19, 4).

² Helvidius Priscus, son-in-law of Paetus Thræsea, is a notable example: he is described below in iv. 5, as *civis senator maritus gener amicus cunctis vitæ officii aequabilis*.

³ A marvellous example of a slave's fidelity is given below in iv. 50: in the hope of saving his master, Piso, from murder, one of his slaves himself pretended to be Piso, and was at once slain by the murderers.

⁴ The reading of M here is *supremae clarorum virorum necessitates ipsa necessitas fortiter tolerata*. Almost all edd. make some change. Spooner,

following Meiser, inserts *necis* after *ipsa*, which seems to be unnecessary to bring out his meaning: 'distinguished men were doomed to a self-inflicted death: the doom itself was borne with fortitude.' But the words *supremae necessitates* do not necessarily imply a self-inflicted death, though they certainly could not be used, as Wolff suggests, of minor punishments such as exile or imprisonment. Fisher follows *b*, omitting *ipsa necessitas* and reading simply *necessitates fortiter toleratae*. If we take the reading of M as it stands, we may explain *supremae necessitates* of the announced necessity of death, as distinguished from the death itself. Thus in the case of Seneca, his courage and his conduct on the arrival of the centurion with the death sentence (*qui necessitatem denuntiaret*) take up a whole chapter; the fortitude with which he met death itself occupies another (Ann. xv. 62, 63).

⁵ This passage sounds the lowest note of religious pessimism. In Ann. vi. 22 Tac. seems unwilling to accept the Epicurean view *non initia nostri, non finem, non denique homines dis*

General
review of
the Empire
at this
period.

But before I enter upon my allotted task, let me recall what was the condition of the city at that time; what the temper of the armies, what the attitude of the Provinces;¹ what were the sound things, what the sickly things, throughout the world,² that so we may understand not only the course and issue of events—so often an affair of chance—but also their reasons and their causes.³

State of
feeling in
the city
after Nero's
death;

The death of Nero was at first welcomed with transports of delight. But it gave rise to many reflections, not only in the city—in the minds of the Fathers, the people, and the Urban troops—but also among the Legions and their Generals; for now the secret of the Empire had been divulged, that Emperors could be made elsewhere than at Rome.⁴

curae. But in this passage he goes beyond that position, suggesting not merely the indifference of the gods to the happiness of man, but their positive delight in punishing him. So Lucan in the famous passage—

*Felix Roma quidem civesque habitura
beatos*

*Si Libertatis superis tam cura placeret
Quam vindicta placet* (iv. 807-9).

It is to be remarked that there is a note of pessimism in almost all the great Roman writers, even of the Augustan age. Even the contented Horace tells us—

*Aetas parentum peior avis tulit
Nos nequiores mox daturos
Progeniem vitiosorem.*

(*Od.* iii. 6, 46-8.)

And again Livy, the glorifier of Roman history, bids the reader mark the declension of the times—

*Labente deinde paulatim disciplina,
velut desidentes primo mores sequatur
animo; deinde ut magis magisque
lapsi sint; tum ire coeperint praecipites:
donec ad haec tempora, quibus nec vitia
nostra nec remedia pati possumus, per-
ventum est.* (Praef. § 9.)

¹ The following chapters, from 4 to 11, are taken up with a masterly sketch of the condition of men's minds in Rome, and of the state of affairs throughout the Empire, after Nero's death. In chap. 12 he takes up the narrative as

promised in chap. 1, from the 1st of Jan. A.D. 69.

² By the phrase *toto terrarum orbe* Tac. means the Roman Empire. In the sketch which follows no mention is made of any country or nation outside the Empire: not even of those tribes or nations which were a perpetual menace to Rome upon her frontiers, and whose incursions are mentioned in the books which follow. The words *quis habitus provinciarum* might lead one to expect some account of the attitude of the inhabitants of the provinces, as well as of the armies. But not one word is said about the feelings or the condition of the provincials; the only reference to the inhabitants at all is in chap. 8, where it is mentioned that the tribes bordering on Germany had a grievance against Galba as having been less well treated than others. Also Tac. here speaks of the 'strong or sickly spots' in the Empire: what he means are the various conditions which were elements of strength and loyalty to the Empire, or on the other hand of disaffection and discontent.

³ Thus emphatically does Tac. lay claim to the character of a scientific historian. His aim is to be not only a narrator of the facts of history, but a searcher into their causes.

⁴ The 'secret of Empire' that is here thus described can hardly be called,

The Fathers were well pleased, making at once full use of their freedom as towards a new and absent Prince; hardly less was the satisfaction of the leading Knights. Hope ran high among the sounder part of the populace—those who were attached to great houses, or were the clients and freedmen of condemned or banished patrons; while the degraded rabble which haunts the theatres and the circus, the lowest class of slaves, as well as those persons of squandered fortunes who had been shamefully maintained by Nero, observed an attitude of sullen and greedy expectancy.¹

5 The soldiery of the city² had long been trained to swear allegiance to the Caesars; they had been led to desert Nero rather by trickery and pressure than by any inclination of their own;³ so when they and in the army.

as Spooner translates it, 'a constitutional secret': it was rather a new discovery which burst upon the world by surprise. The secret consisted in discovering the absence of any regular constitutional mode of fixing the succession to the Empire, an omission which practically left the choice of an Emperor to the armies. Augustus had made no provision for that most difficult of all functions, the choice of a successor, though the plan actually arrived at, that of a selection in essence military, made constitutional by a vote of the Senate, might well have commended itself to the deviser of an Imperial Republic. The phrases *arcana imperii*, *arcana dominationis* (Ann. ii. 36 and 59) have quite a different sense, meaning 'maxims' or 'principles of government.'

The phrase *evulgato imperii arcano* gives the key to the history of the civil wars that follows in these books. The contest in each case was really a contest, not between Generals, but between armies. Otho was enthusiastically supported by the Praetorians as against the German army, and Vitellius no less enthusiastically by the German. Then followed the contest of the Eastern versus the Western armies, in which superior generalship and superior states-

manship secured victory for the former.

¹ Tac. seems here to give a careful enumeration of the various elements in the population of Rome: (1) the *Patres* or Senators; (2) *Primores equitum*; (3) *pars populi integra et magnis domibus adnexa*; along with whom, included in the same class, are *clientes libertique damnatorum*; and lastly (4) *plebs sordida*, the population that haunts the circus and the theatre, with whom are coupled *deterrimi servorum*, and a needy rabble supported by Nero, apparently for no good purpose. The *pars integra* of the people are its self-supporting respectable members, sound in means and reputation, with whom are contrasted the lower and meaner free population; so in iii. 74, *sordida pars plebis*.

² *I.e.* the 9 cohorts of Praetorian guards and the 3 *Cohortes Urbanae*: the latter performed the duties of police and watchmen. The phrase *urbanus miles* probably does not include the seven cohorts of *Vigiles*, or night-watchmen, instituted by Augustus.

³ The allusion is to Nymphidius Sabinus and Tigellinus, the two men who had been most active in persuading the Praetorians to transfer their allegiance from Nero to Galba. Tigellinus had been appointed Prefect of the

found that the donative promised in Galba's name was not forthcoming, when they perceived that there would be less room for great services and great rewards in time of peace than in time of war, and that they had been forestalled in the Emperor's favour by the Legions, they became ready for some new movement.

Feeling
created by
the attempt
of Nym-
phidius
Sabinus ;

They were still further agitated by the treasonable attempt of their Prefect Nymphidius Sabinus to seize the Empire for himself ; for though Nymphidius had been crushed at once, and the head of the conspiracy removed, there were many soldiers who had been privy to it ; and there was no lack of tongues to rail at the senility and avarice of Galba. Galba's severity also, which had been so commended before, and had gained him such military renown, was irksome to men who rebelled against the discipline of olden times, and who, during fourteen years of service under Nero, had learnt to love the vices of their Emperors no less than they had formerly revered their virtues.¹ Added to which there was a saying of Galba's, noble indeed from the

and by the
severity of
Galba.

Praetorians by Nero after the death of Burrus, in conjunction with Faenius Rufus, in A.D. 62 ; after which he became an adviser and associate of Nero in all his cruelties and debaucheries (Ann. xiv. 57, xv. 37, 50). Faenius Rufus was put to death for joining in the conspiracy of Piso in A.D. 65, and his place as joint-Prefect of the Praetorians was conferred on Nymphidius, who had taken a prominent part in bringing the conspirators to justice. Before Nero's death, as soon as his cause was evidently lost, Nymphidius induced the Praetorians to acknowledge Galba as Emperor, partly by the promise of a huge donative in his name, partly by assuring them that Nero had fled, and was on his way to Egypt. Having ousted Tigellinus, Nymphidius found himself the most powerful person in

Rome ; disappointed in the hope of making a tool of Galba, he attempted to seize supreme power for himself. But his attempt failed ; the Praetorians, at the instigation of the Tribune Antonius Honoratus, closed the gates against him, and on his resorting to force, he was overwhelmed and slain.

¹ Galba's severity, avarice, and age were the three main crimes charged against him ; but whatever his faults or merits, he had no sufficient backing behind him to cope with the various forces which dominated the situation. And though he permitted (perhaps rather than ordered) cruelties on his entry into Rome, we are told that his former *severitas* had slackened towards the end of his rule in Spain.

point of view of the state, but perilous for himself—a saying moreover which corresponded but little with the rest of his doings—that, *He chose his soldiers, but did not buy them.*

6 Feeble and old himself, Galba's reputation was burdened and ruined by having to bear the odium and the contempt excited by the profligacy of Titus Vinius, and the inertness of Cornelius Laco¹—the former the vilest,² the latter the most supine, of men. Galba's progress to Rome had been slow³

Odium
excited by
Vinius and
Laco.

¹ Titus Vinius was Galba's most trusted lieutenant; a full account of him is given below in chap. 48. He was one of Galba's legates, in command of the 6th legion when it declared Galba Emperor. He had strongly urged Galba to accept the offer of empire made to him by Vindex, but to oppose the rebellion which Vindex headed. He became henceforth Galba's most confidential adviser, and even before Nero's death he was sent on to Rome to prepare the way for Galba's accession.

Laco had also been in Spain under Galba. He was appointed *Praefectus Praetorio* by Galba on the death of Nymphidius; he had previously been an assessor to the Prefect, that is, his legal adviser in the discharge of his duties. Many of the higher magistrates had such 'assessors' to keep them right in point of law. Galba never got rid of the influence of the narrow clique which had accompanied him from Spain. Even Otho, whose ready adhesion as Governor of Lusitania had been of great consequence to Galba at the beginning, was treated with no confidence. As Suet. (Galba 14) puts it, *Regebatur trium arbitrio quos una et intra Palatium habitantes, nec umquam non adhaerentes, paedagogos vulgo vocabant. Ii erant T. Vinius, legatus eius in Hispania, cupiditatis immensae; Cornelius Laco, ex assessore praefectus praetorii, arrogantia socordiaque intolerabilis; libertus Icelus, paulo antea anulis aureis et Marciani cognomine ornatus.* We shall hear much of all three in the following chapters. Galba was no statesman; he was no judge of character or of political opportunity;

what virtues he had he practised in the spirit of a pedant.

² The word *deterimus* has various meanings in Tac. Its meaning here is fixed by its place being taken by *flagitiorum* in the second part of the antithesis; *flagitiorum* corresponding to *deterimus*, as *inertia* corresponds to *ignavissimus*.

³ Galba's march to Rome, as well as his whole proceedings, had been slow and ineffective. The news of the rising of Vindex, at first treated contemptuously by Nero, reached him on the 19th of March A.D. 68. On the 2nd of April Galba was for the first time saluted as Imperator by his soldiers of the 6th legion. Nero died upon the 9th of June, and within a week (*ἡβδομαίος* Plut. Galb. 7) Galba's freedman Icelus brought him the news of the death. Thereupon Galba, who at first had prepared to act in the name of the Senate and the People, assumed the title of Caesar, and proceeded in leisurely fashion to march to Rome, his only important lieutenant being M. Salvius Otho, governor of Lusitania. The difficulties which he had to encounter on his march, arising from the recent outbreak of Vindex, and the semi-mutinous condition of the German army, are only hinted at by the historians; but they must have been great, and were probably the cause of his slow progress. Leaving Spain in the month of July he only reached Rome in the early autumn, having received no important addition of forces on his way. And having been for eight years in a provincial command, he was out of touch with affairs in Rome.

and stained with blood.¹ He had put to death Cingonius Varro,² Consul Designate, and Petronius Turpilianus, a Consular; the former because he was an associate of Nymphidius, the latter because he was one of Nero's Generals. Perishing undefended and unheard, they were counted as innocent men.

Strange
troops
quartered
in the city.

Galba's entry into the city, after the slaughter of so many unarmed soldiers, was ill-omened: even the perpetrators felt the horror of it. The city was full of strange troops. One Legion had been brought over from Spain;³ the Legion enrolled out of the fleet by Nero was still there; there were many units also from Germany, Britain, and Illyricum, which had been selected by Nero and sent on to the Caspian Gates⁴ for his intended war against the Albanians, and which he had afterwards recalled to crush the rising of Vindex—the whole constituting a vast material for any new and daring venture, without preference for one leader rather than another.

¹ Why the entry of Galba into Rome should have been so unnecessarily stained with blood is not very clear. Nero in his extremity had enrolled a number of the naval soldiers (*classici* or *classarii*) into a legion, the 1st *Adiutrix*. The remainder seem to have clamoured for a similar privilege, and on the approach of Galba poured out tumultuously to meet him. Their tumult was taken for an act of rebellion; the cavalry was let loose upon them; and Galba, not content with the slaughter thus caused, kept the rest in custody.

² Cingonius Varro had been an associate of Nymphidius in his attempt to seize power; Turpilianus, a harmless old man, had been the successor of Suetonius in the government of Britain. He was put to death solely because of his fidelity to Nero.

³ When proclaimed Emperor, Galba had only one legion with him, the 6th (*Victrix*); he subsequently raised a new legion, the 7th (*Galbiana*), from the natives of the province. The word here

used being *Hispana*, and not *Hispanica*, commentators have supposed that the legion here referred to is the 7th. But it is incredible that Galba, at such a moment, should have taken with him a raw legion, just recruited, rather than his own tried legion which had first saluted him as Imperator. As it was, he was bound to fail because he had no sufficient force behind him. His only chance was to win over the Praetorians; instead of which he took the surest means of earning their disfavour.

⁴ This pass was more usually called the 'Caucasian Pass' (Plin. N. H. vi. 13, 15), being probably that leading from the Black Sea to the Albanian country on the Caspian. That passage lies to the S. of the main chain of the Caucasus; the same by which Tiflis is approached. The 'Caspian Gates,' properly so called, were on the far or E. side of the Caspian, leading from Persia to Central Asia. See map at end of vol. ii. (Ann. xi.-xvi.) of this edition.

7 At this juncture came the news of the deaths of Clodius Macer¹ and Fonteius Capito.² Macer, without doubt, had attempted a rising in Africa, and had been put to death under orders from Galba by the Procurator Trebonius Garutianus. Capito had made a similar attempt in Germany, and the Legates Cornelius Aquinus and Fabius Valens³ had put him to death without awaiting orders. Some believed that Capito, foul as he was in life and defiled by avarice, had never intended to revolt, but had been urged to take up arms by his Legates; that the Legates, on his turning a deaf ear to them, had treacherously raised the charge against him; and that Galba—whether from weakness of character,⁴ or from an unwillingness to examine too closely into acts which, whatever their character, could not now be undone—had approved of what they did.

Deaths of
Clodius
Macer and
Fonteius
Capito.

Both deaths, however, were badly received; and once the Emperor had become unpopular, whatever he did, whether it were good or bad, told against him. All offices were now put up for sale; all power was in the hands of the freedmen; the slaves, hurrying

Unpopu-
larity of
Galba.

¹ Clodius Macer was *legatus Caesaris* (i.e. commander of the army) in Africa: it is possible that his ambitious schemes (see below chap. 73; Plut. Galb. 6, 13, and Suet. Galb. 11) had something to do with Galba's reluctance to leave Spain with a general in revolt behind him.

² Whatever may have been the reason for the murder of Capito, it is obvious that the German armies were at this time in an uneasy state, and by no means ready to accept Galba's rule without a question. In chap. 58 we are told that Capito, however bad his character, was personally popular with his army.

³ This man, of whom we shall hear much as general of one of the armies of Vitellius in his invasion of Italy, was legate of the 1st legion, in Lower Germany. He had been the first in the

German army to declare for Galba, and had conveyed to him the important information that Verginius was not intending to move on his own account. The murder of Capito was thus intended to remove a rival out of Galba's way; but Galba's lack of gratitude for this service alienated the self-seeking Valens, who used all his artifices to induce Vitellius to seize the imperial power, and was the first to proclaim him as Emperor at the Agrippinensian Colony on the 2nd of Jan. A.D. 69 (chap. 57).

⁴ The phrase *mobilitas ingenii*, in its natural sense, is about the last quality that could be attributed to Galba. He was stern and inflexible throughout; and he was totally destitute of that pliancy of character and political sagacity which were indispensable in such a crisis of affairs.

to seize their chances under an aged Emperor, laid greedy hands on everything; and the new Court, without the same excuses, exhibited all the vices of the old.¹ Even the age of Galba excited the ridicule and contempt of men who had been accustomed to a youthful Prince, and who measured Emperors as the vulgar measures them, by the beauty of their persons.

Such was the state of men's minds in Rome, so far 8
as one may speak for so great a multitude. The Spanish Provinces were under the command of Cluvius Rufus,² a man of eloquence and high civil accomplishments, but without experience in war; the States of Gaul,³ besides cherishing the memory of Vindex, were under an obligation to Galba for the recent gift of the Roman franchise, as well as for an abatement of tribute for the future. But the tribes in the neighbourhood of the German armies,⁴

Condition
of the Pro-
vinces.

¹ These words recall the days of Claudius, under whose régime his freedmen were as corrupt as they were powerful: see Ann. xi. 29 and below v. 9.

² Cluvius Rufus, the distinguished historian, is one of the very few writers quoted by Tac. as an authority. He is referred to in Ann. xiii. 20 and xiv. 2, in both cases for a version of an incident different from that given by the ordinary authorities. In the *Histories* his work is never quoted, though it seems to have covered at least part of the reign of Vitellius (see the story quoted from Pliny by Mr. Spooner, *Introd.* p. 19). Yet he is named on several important occasions (i. 76; ii. 58 and 65); on one occasion as having been, along with the poet Silius Italicus, a witness to the terms of abdication agreed to in the temple of Apollo between Vitellius and Sabinus the brother of Vespasian (iii. 65). He was described by the philosopher Helvidius Priscus as one *qui perinde dives et eloquentia clarus nulli umquam sub Nerone periculum facesisset* (iv. 43). The writing of history held a high place in the estimation of

Romans, and it is to be noticed how many Roman historians were men of distinguished position, and like Tac. himself had held high office in the State.

³ The term *Galliae* in the plural, which so often occurs in Tac., is used in two separate senses. Sometimes it denotes the four great Roman provinces into which Gaul was divided (*Narbonensis, Lugdunensis, Aquitania*, and *Belgica*: see map in vol. i.); sometimes it is used of the individual Gallic states or tribes (*civitates*) within the Roman provinces, which still retained their tribal form and cantonal system of administration. Spooner supposes that the term *Galliae* in this passage denotes the four Roman provinces; but it is clear from the next sentence that Tac. is only speaking of the tribes propitiated by Galba, as he expressly states that other Gallic *civitates* were discontented and jealous of the benefits given to their neighbours. He is not speaking of the Gauls as a whole, but only of those affected by the recent arrangements.

⁴ It will be noticed that Tac. here speaks of the German armies, not of

which had been treated with less consideration—some of them had even been deprived of territory—felt no less aggrieved by the privileges granted to their neighbours than by the injury done to themselves.

The German armies were at once irritated and alarmed—a very dangerous condition for so powerful a force: they were elated by their recent successes, and uneasy at having espoused the wrong cause. They had been slow to revolt against Nero; and Verginius had not at once declared for Galba. Whether Verginius had declined the Empire was uncertain; all knew that the soldiers had offered it to him; and the death of Fonteius Capito was resented even by those who could not disapprove of it. The recall of Verginius, under pretence of friendship, left the German army without a leader:¹ that he was not sent back to them, and was even regarded with suspicion, the army took as an accusation against themselves.

Feeling in
the German
armies.

the German provinces. The two Germanies—Upper and Lower—of which we shall hear so much in the books that follow, were not provinces in the regular sense of the word. They were great frontier military commands for the protection of Gaul against the invasion of German tribes from the other side of the Rhine. The actual territory occupied by these armies was small, consisting of comparatively narrow strips along the banks of the Rhine. Lower Germany at this time comprised no territory at all upon the E. of the river; Upper Germany was about equally distributed on the two sides. Upper Germany extended from Vindonissa (*Windisch*), a few miles below the lake of Constance, to Mogontiacum (*Mainz*), those being the two great military stations of the province. Lower Germany extended along the Rhine from that point to the sea, including the towns of Cologne and Bonn, and comprising all the territory between the Rhine and the NE. frontier of Gaul. The principal military station of Lower Germany was at *Vetera Castra* (usually

called *Vetera*) opposite to the valley of the Lippe. Here two legions were quartered; a third was at Bonna (modern *Bonn*) not far above Cologne, while a fourth was at Novaesium (*Neuss*), nearly half-way between Cologne and *Vetera*. The lower army had been under the command of Fonteius Capito: murdered as we have seen after the death of Nero at the instigation of Fabius Valens. In an evil hour, Galba sent Aulus Vitellius to take his place. The upper army had been under Verginius, a man of the highest character, to whom the Empire had been offered by his army. He had declined the offer; but Galba thought him too dangerous a man to continue in so important a command, and sent a feeble nonentity—Hordeonius Flaccus—in his place. Thus fatally did Galba, by two ill-judged appointments at a most critical time, add fuel to the discontent of these two great armies.

¹ *I.e.* there was no General in either army after the removal of Verginius fit to take the lead in the interests of Galba.

The Upper army held their Legate Hordeonius in contempt. He was old, lame, and feeble; he had neither courage nor authority; he was unable to control his men even in quiet times, and their present frenzy was but inflamed by the feebleness with which he restrained it. The army of Lower Germany was for some time without a General of Consular rank, until Galba sent out Aulus Vitellius,¹ son of the Vitellius who had been Censor and thrice Consul, thinking that would be sufficient.²

Britain and
Illyricum
quiet.

In the British army, there were no angry feelings; indeed no Legions behaved so well throughout the troubles of the Civil Wars: whether because they were so far away, and cut off by the Ocean, or because continual warfare had taught them to reserve their hatred for the enemy.³

Illyricum⁴ too was quiet, though the Legions which

¹ Aulus Vitellius, so soon to be raised to power, was the son of the Lucius Vitellius whose character, as combining high virtue in the provinces with despicable scrvility in Rome, is so finely described by Tac. in Ann. vi. 32 (*cesserunt prima postremis, et bona iuventae senectus flagitiosa obliteravit*). Lucius, the father, had been consul in the years A.D. 34, 43, and 47: in this last year he uttered the famous flattery to Claudius when celebrating the Secular Games—*Saepe facias!* He was Censor with the Emperor Claudius from A.D. 47 to 52.

Aulus, the future Emperor, was born in the year A.D. 15, and had been consul in A.D. 48. Corrupt in his private life, equally corrupt in the discharge of offices within the city (Suet. Vit. 4), he had governed Africa as proconsul with justice and integrity, in *provincia singulari innocentiam praestitit biennio continuato* (Suet. Vit. 5); *quippe integrum illic ac favorabilem proconsulatum egerat* (Hist. ii. 97). Tac. notes, on the other hand, that the proconsulate of Vespasian, in the same province, had been *famosus inuisusque* (ib.). It is remarkable how many distinguished Romans who lived corrupt and debauched lives in Rome were braced up

to better things by the responsibilities of command in the provinces or in the field. This was especially the case with Otho; after a life of profligacy in Rome, he was 'seconded' (as we would say) to the command of Lusitania, *ubi usque ad civilia arma non ex priore infamia sed integre sancteque egit, procax otii et potestatis temperantior* (Ann. xiii. 46).

² The words *id satis videbatur* imply not merely that Galba expected the army to be satisfied with the appointment of Vitellius, but also thought that he had dealt satisfactorily with the situation. They thus have a satirical force—little did Galba know what he was doing in appointing such a man to such a place.

³ The legions at this time in Britain were the 2nd (*Augusta*) brought over by Claudius from Upper Germany; the 9th (*Hispana*); and the 20th (*Valeria Victrix*). The British force had recently been weakened by the recall in A.D. 68 of the famous 14th (*Gemina Martia Victrix*) with its Batavian auxiliaries, which Nero had designed for his war in the East.

⁴ Illyricum is used here in the wider sense referred to above i. 2 n.

had been brought over by Nero had made overtures to Verginius during their stay in Italy.¹ But as their stations were far apart—a most salutary arrangement for keeping soldiers to their allegiance—they could mingle neither their forces nor their vices.²

10 The East, as yet, was undisturbed. Syria, with a force of four Legions, was held by Licinius Mucianus, a man notorious alike in good fortune and in evil.³ In youth, he had sought advancement by cultivating the friendship of the great; after that, his means exhausted, his position insecure, and having incurred, as was supposed, the displeasure of Claudius,⁴ he was secluded in Asia, where he was as near to being an exile as he was afterwards little removed from being Emperor. A compound of good and evil qualities, he was at once vigorous and voluptuous, arrogant and unassuming; given up to pleasure in his leisure moments, he was capable of great virtues when there was a call for them;⁵ commendable in his public

The East quiet also. Character of Mucianus.

¹ The fact that even the Illyrian legions made overtures to Verginius indicates how great was his reputation, and how readily he might have accepted the offer of empire had he been so minded. And from what we learn otherwise of his character it might perhaps have been said of him that he was *capax imperii nisi recusasset*.

² The alliterative epigram *nec vitii nec viribus miscbantur* is barely translatable. The words mean that the two armies were too far apart to act in conjunction, or to concert measures either for good or evil. These words supply the key to the success of Vitellius in his conflict with Otho. The forces of Otho were in no way inferior to those of Vitellius if they could all have been brought into the decisive field in time. But the German armies were more concentrated; they were near enough to each other to combine both their *virtus* and their *vires*. Taking instantaneous action, they arrived upon the scene of combat fully prepared for battle, while Otho's Pannonian and Moesian forces were lingering upon the road.

³ Marcus Licinius Crassus Mucianus was a man of distinguished birth, being grandson of the Triumvir Licinius Crassus, famed alike for his wealth and for his disastrous defeat by the Parthians at Carrhae in B.C. 53. He had been cos. in A.D. 66. Vespasian was more fortunate in his lieutenants than either Otho or Vitellius; Mucianus was the Maecenas, as Antonius Primus was the Agrippa, of his fortunes.

⁴ Apparently because of his attentions to Messalina.

⁵ The words *quoties expedierat* are translated by Ritter, Spooner, and other edd. 'as often as he was on service.' *Expedire* means 'to disentangle,' 'to extricate,' and so 'to get ready' or 'to be ready'; and there are two passages in the *Histories* (i. 88, and ii. 99) where the context shows that preparation for war is intended. But no such context occurs here; and the words may be taken in the natural sense of the impersonal *expedit*—'whenever it was expedient': i.e. he could show high qualities whenever there was a call or need for them.

actions, he was ill spoken-of in his private life; and though he acquired great influence by various arts over friends, colleagues, and provincials, he was one to whom it came easier to pass on the Empire to another than to keep it for himself.

The Ju-
daean war.

The conduct of the Judaeian war, with a force of three Legions, had been placed by Nero in the hands of Flavius Vespasianus.¹ That General entertained no ambitions, no feelings, adverse to Galba; indeed, as I shall mention in the proper place, he had sent his son Titus to proffer homage and service to him. Not till after his elevation did we read the secrets of Fate, and discover how prodigies and divinations had destined Empire for Vespasian and his sons.

Egypt.

Egypt, and the forces for its control, have been ruled by Roman Knights in the place of Kings ever since the time of the Divine Augustus.² For it was thought advisable to retain under the home government a province so difficult of access, and so rich in corn; a populace so fractious and excitable, so licentious and superstitious, so ignorant of law, and unused

¹ Titus Flavius Sabinus Vespasianus was born in the Sabine country in the year A.D. 9, being the second son of Flavius Sabinus, a man of modest position. His mother, Vespasia Polla, came of a better family; hence the second son, according to a fashion of the time, took on her name as a cognomen in the form *Vespasianus*. Hitherto Vespasian had only been known as a strenuous soldier; he had been a *tribunus militum* in Thrace, and in A.D. 43 he was *legatus legionis* in Britain, where he highly distinguished himself, winning many battles and conquering the Isle of Wight. He rose in due course to the usual offices, being *cos. suf.* in the year A.D. 51. He was proconsul of Africa under Nero, but in that office he had won a bad name for avarice and harshness. In A.D. 66 he had been chosen by Nero to conduct the great

war against the Jews, which at the moment when our narrative begins he had all but brought to a successful conclusion.

² For the peculiar position of Egypt—subject at this day to a system of government as anomalous as that instituted by Augustus—see Ann. ii. 59: 'For Egypt holds the key, as it were, both of sea and land; and he (Augustus) was afraid that anyone occupying that country, with however small a force, might threaten Italy with starvation.' Two legions, under an officer called *praefectus*, formed the regular garrison of Egypt (Ann. iv. 5). The effect of appointing an *egues* to take charge of Egypt was to place its government under the direct control of the Emperor without interference from the Senate, just as in the lesser provinces governed by procurators.

to the rule of magistrates. The present governor was an Egyptian, Tiberius Alexander by name.¹

Africa and her Legion, now that Clodius Macer had been killed, were ready, after their experience of a petty tyrant, to accept an Emperor of any kind.

Africa and the remaining Provinces.

The two Mauretianas,² Raetia, Noricum, Thrace, and other Provinces under the rule of Procurators, were drawn into the preferences or antipathies of the more powerful armies that adjoined them.

The Provinces which had no armies, and Italy most of all, lay at the mercy of any master, destined to pass as one of the spoils of war.

Such was the state of the Roman world when the Consuls Servius Galba and Titus Vinius, the former being Consul for the second time, entered upon the last year of their lives—and well-nigh the last of the Republic.

12 Not many days after the 1st of January came a dispatch from Pompeius Propinquus, the Procurator of Belgic Gaul, announcing that the army of Upper Germany had broken its oath of allegiance to Galba, and was clamouring for some one else as Emperor:³ leaving the choice to the Senate and People of Rome so as to soften the news of their revolt. This intelligence hastened on a project of adoption which Galba had for some time been considering in his own mind, and with his intimate friends. No subject indeed had been more freely canvassed during those months, partly from men's avidity for discussing such topics, partly because of Galba's declining years. Few showed any judgment, or love of country, in their

News of the revolt of the Upper German army.

Galba hurries on a project of adoption.

¹ An Egyptian by residence only; he was a Jew by birth, and had been procurator of Judaea from A.D. 46 to 48.

² The two Mauretianas, East and West (*Caesariensis* and *Tingitana*).

corresponded more or less exactly to the modern Algeria and Morocco.

³ The Latin has *imperatorem alium*; i.e. any Emperor other than Galba.

surmises; many were moved by personal ambitions to suggest this one or that one, some friend or patron of their own; some too were moved by hatred of Titus Vinius, whose increasing power was making him more hated every day. Galba's facile¹ temper also encouraged the open-mouthed cupidity of his friends in their new fortunes, seeing that evildoers had little to fear, and much to gain, under so infirm and so credulous a Prince.

Difference
of opinion
as to who
should be
adopted.

The real powers of the Principate were divided 13 between the Consul Titus Vinius and Cornelius Laco, Prefect of the Praetorians; not less in favour was Galba's freedman Icelus,² who had been presented with the ring, and distinguished by the equestrian name of Marcianus. But these men were at odds among themselves; each had his own aims in minor matters; and on the question of choosing a successor, they were split into two parties. Vinius favoured Otho; Laco and Icelus were at one, not so much in favouring any particular candidate, as in wanting some one else than Otho. Galba was well aware of the friendship between Vinius and Otho; and as Vinius had an unmarried daughter, while Otho himself had no wife, the tongues of those who pass nothing by in silence marked them out as father-and son-in-law to each other.

¹ What is said here of the *facilitas* of Galba might seem at first sight to be inconsistent with his character for *severitas*. But his austerity seems mainly to have been expended on military matters; he had no political firmness, and the reference here seems to be to his putting himself entirely in the hands of his friends and freedmen. See chap. 49.

² Icelus was the confidential slave who had hurried over to Galba in Spain with the first news of Nero's death. The golden ring, and the *angustus clavus* a narrow purple stripe running down

the tunic), were the characteristic insignia of the *equites*. From the time of Augustus, at least, the golden ring was worn by the whole of the *Ordo Equester*.

Mommsen points out (*Staatsrecht*, iii. p. 515 n. 1) that the equestrian ring is usually spoken of in the plural (*anuli*), as in this passage, even when only one is referred to. So in ii. 57; iv. 3; and Plut. Galba 7. Often more than one ring was worn (Hor. Sat. ii. 7, 9); Trimalchio wore five (Petronius, chap. 71).

I think also that Galba had some regard for his country in his mind:—*In vain*, he thought, *would it have been taken away from Nero if it were to be left with Otho*. For Otho, after a neglected boyhood, and an ill-regulated youth, had won Nero's favour by emulating his vices.¹ Thus it was that Nero had left his favourite mistress, Poppaea Sabina, with Otho, as a confidant in his love affairs, until such time as he could put his wife Octavia out of the way.² After a time, however, becoming suspicious of Otho's relations with that same lady, he secluded him, under pretence of a Legateship, in Lusitania. Having governed that Province in a kindly fashion, Otho was the first to go over to Galba, and had been active in his cause; and finding himself the most conspicuous personage among Galba's followers while the war lasted, he forthwith conceived a hope of the succession. This hope he fanned into a hotter flame day by day; he had a strong following among the soldiers, and his resemblance to Nero secured for him the favour of the Court.

Galba distrusts Otho.

14 But Galba had other views. When news of the German revolt arrived, though nothing was as yet known for certain about Vitellius, he felt anxious as

He summons a council and proposes Piso for adoption.

¹ The words *luxus* and *luxuria* have two distinct meanings in Tac., according to the context. Sometimes they denote profligacy and debauchery of every kind; sometimes they stand only for extravagance. That the latter is the meaning in this passage is suggested by a passage in Plutarch, who, like Tac., tells us that Otho and Nero became friends and companions *διὰ τὴν ἀσωτίαν*. To illustrate the point he tells this story: entertaining Otho at dinner one day, Nero showed parsimony in dispensing a certain costly perfume. Soon afterwards Otho entertained Nero in return, when he dispensed the same perfume on the most lavish scale, as though it were but water. Nero was delighted. The phrase in Tac. '*aemulatione luxus*'

seems to show that Tac. knew the story, and uses the word *luxus* in the sense of extravagance. On the other hand, what Tac. says in the following words about Poppaea would suit the other meaning of the word.

² The story here given differs materially from that in Ann. xiii. 45, 46; and as the *Annals* were the later work, we must accept that as the revised version. According to that account, Poppaea was first the mistress, next the wife, of Otho. Otho boasting of her beauty to Nero, Nero conceived a passion for her himself, put Otho out of the way by giving him an appointment in Lusitania, and finally made her his wife after he had divorced Octavia.

to what turn the violence of the army might take; he had no confidence even in the Urban troops; and so he resorted to what he considered the only remedy, and held a kind of Imperial election.¹ Summoning Vinius and Laco to a council, as well as Marius Celsus,² Consul Designate, and Ducenius Geminus, Prefect of the City, he began with a few words about his own old age, and then ordered Piso Licinianus³ to be summoned—whether of his own choice, or, as some supposed, at the instance of Laco, who had formed a close friendship with Piso in the house of Rubellius Plautus.⁴ Laco, however, was cunning enough to pretend that Piso was unknown to him; and the high esteem in which Piso was held added much to the weight of his advocacy.

Character
of Piso.

Now Piso was a man of noble birth on both sides, being the son of Marcus Crassus and Scribonia.⁵ In looks and demeanour he was a man of the ancient type; in character, he might justly be regarded as severe: those who took a harsher view of him considered him morose. It was this side of his character that recommended him to Galba for adoption; but it raised in equal measure the doubts of others.

¹ *Comitia imperii* is a semi-sarcastic phrase, after the pattern of the usual *comitia consularia*.

² Marius Celsus is one of the few persons of whom Tac. records nothing but to his praise. He served Galba faithfully to the end (see below, chaps. 31, 39, 45); Otho was so impressed by his loyalty to Galba that he not only saved him from the wrath of the soldiers themselves (*eandem virtutem admirantibus cui irascebantur*), but also admitted him to his friendship, and selected him as one of his three generals to conduct the campaign against Vitellius (chaps. 71 and 87; ii. 23).

³ The full name of this man was Lucius Calpurnius Piso Frugi Licinianus. His father was M. Licinius Crassus Frugi (cos. A.D. 27); but

having been adopted by L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi, the adopted son bore the full name of his adoptive father, adding thereto, according to custom, the name *Licinianus* (= 'late of the gens *Licina*'), to indicate the gens to which he belonged by birth.

⁴ This Rubellius Plautus was a great-grandson of the Emperor Tiberius through his mother Julia: a distinction which caused him to be put to death by Nero out of jealousy, in the year A.D. 62 (Ann. xiii. 19; xiv. 57-59). His son (or brother), Rubellius Blandus, has been immortalised by Juvenal as a representative of extravagant pride in high birth (Sat. viii. 39-40).

⁵ Scribonia was a grand-daughter of Sextus Pompey, son of Pompey the Great.

Taking Piso by the hand, Galba is reported to have addressed him thus:—

Galba's
speech to
Piso.

15 'Were I a private citizen adopting you in the customary way by a *Curiate Law*,¹ and in the presence of priests, it would have been both a proud thing for me to introduce into my family one sprung from *Gnaeus Pompeius*² and *Marcus Crassus*, and a distinction for you to add the honours of the *Sulpician* and *Lutatian* families³ to your own titles of nobility. But summoned to Empire as I have been by the consent of Gods and men, I have been impelled by your high character and your love of country to offer you, without effort of your own, that Principate for which our fathers⁴ fought, and which I myself have won by arms: following in this the example of the Divine *Augustus*, who exalted to the place next his own, first his sister's son *Marcellus*,⁵ then his son-in-law *Agrippa*, then his own grandchildren, and last of all *Tiberius* his stepson. *Augustus* indeed looked to his own house for a successor, whereas I look to the Republic: not that I have no relatives, and no companions in arms; but having myself attained to Empire by courting no man's favour, I would have my choice approved, not only in regard to my own kin, whose claims I am postponing to yours, but in regard to yours also.⁶

¹ The *Comitia Curiate* had long fallen into abeyance; where the consent of that assembly was still required for certain religious or family purposes, it was represented by a body of 30 lictors, presided over by *pontifices*. On this occasion Galba, as *Pontifex Maximus*, assumes the right in his own case of dispensing with the ordinary legal forms of adoption.

² Piso was directly descended from Pompey the Great through his mother, and from the triumvir Crassus through his father.

³ Galba was descended from both of these illustrious gentes, from the *Sulpician* on his father's side, from the *Lutatian* (he was great-grandson of the famous Q. Lutatius Catulus Capitolinus) on that of his mother.

⁴ Most edd. suppose that there is an

allusion here to the fact that Galba's great-grandfather fought for Caesar in the Civil War, while Piso's great-great-grandfather was Pompey. But the word *maiores* may just as well be taken in the general sense of 'our forefathers.'

⁵ The young Marcellus, married to Julia, the daughter of Augustus, whose death in B.C. 23 was so great a blow to Augustus, and called forth the famous lines of Virgil, *Heu! miserande puer, si qua fata aspera rumpas = Tu Marcellus eris* (Aen. vi. 882-3).

⁶ The meaning is clear, though the expression of it is somewhat involved. The carefulness of his choice will be shown by his having passed by, not only his own relations, but also Piso's elder brother, an excellent man, who might be thought to have a prior claim.

'You have a brother¹ of like nobility to your own, older than you, and himself worthy of this high place, were not you the worthier. You are of an age that has left the passions of youth behind; your past life has nothing in it to be excused. Hitherto you have known only adverse fortune;² but prosperity applies a more searching test³ to character: for whereas misfortune has to be endured, prosperity breeds corruption. Fidelity, freedom, friendship—those choicest possessions of the human spirit—you indeed will cling to as staunchly as before: but others will enfeeble them by servility. Adulation and flattery will break in; and that deadly poisoner of a true heart, self-interest. You and I indeed speak with perfect frankness between ourselves to-day; but other men will care less for us than for our fortunes. To give good counsel to a Prince is an arduous task; but, of whatever kind he be, he can be flattered without affection.

'If the vast fabric of this Empire could stand self-16
poised without a ruler, who more fit than I to set up a Republic? But necessity has now brought us to this, that my age can bestow no greater boon upon the Roman people than a good successor, your youth none better than a good Prince. Under Tiberius, Gaius, and Claudius we were as it were the heritage of a single house:⁴ to

¹ Crassus Scribonianus, so called after his mother Scribonia. He is mentioned below (chap. 47), as assisting at Piso's burial. In iv. 39, he declines a suggestion of empire, *ne paratis quidem corrumpi facilis, adeo metuens incerta*.

² His father, mother, and brother had been put to death by Claudius; another brother had been killed, and himself exiled, by Nero.

³ In the phrase *secundares acrioribus stimulis animos explorant* Tac. is guilty of a confusion of metaphor.

⁴ The difficulties of this passage have scarcely been cleared up by the commentators. Literally it runs thus: 'We have hitherto been the heritage of one family; that we begin to be chosen,

will be in the place of freedom.' The word *hereditas* means 'the thing or property inherited'; it is used in no other sense by Tac. (see Ann. ii. 48, 1, and xv. 19, 5); and cannot bear the sense, which some put on it, of 'inheritors.' In what sense can 'we' be styled an *hereditas*? It can only be as emperors, as holders of imperial power. 'We emperors'—that is, our position as emperors—have hitherto been an inheritance of one family; but when we begin to be elected, judgment will have free play,' etc. In other words, 'the imperial power, hitherto hereditary, will become elective, and be bestowed upon the most worthy.'

So completely did Roman law and custom regard sonship by adoption as

begin a system of selection will be a kind of freedom ; and now that the Julian and Claudian houses have come to an end, adoption will find out the worthiest. To be begotten and born of Princes is an affair of chance, where no weighing of merit can come in ; whereas in adoption the judgment is unhampered, and general opinion will point the way to choice. Let us ever have Nero before our eyes, puffed up with his long Caesarian ancestry. It was not Vindex, with his unarmed Province,¹ nor I with my single Legion,² that shook off his yoke from the public neck : it was his own monstrous nature, his own debauched living, that condemned him—as Roman Emperor was never condemned before.

‘ Summoned as I have been to Empire by war and by men’s judgment of me, I shall always be the mark of envy, however great my merits : be not you dismayed if amid the shock of a world in arms, two Legions³ are not yet reduced to order. I myself had no assured succession ; and when men hear of your adoption, I shall cease to be thought old—the one crime now cast up against me. Bad men will never cease to lament Nero : it must be my care and yours that he be not lamented by the good also. No time this for further admonition ; if I have done well in choosing you, my whole purpose is fulfilled.

‘ The surest way, and the shortest, of discerning what is good and what is evil, is to recall what were the things

equivalent to sonship by birth, that Galba treats the whole line of emperors before himself as belonging to a single family, though each emperor had succeeded by adoption only, and only two of them (Gaius and Nero) had any connexion with the Caesarian house, and that only through females. That Tac. does not mean to exclude Nero from the single family is clear from the fact that within the next few lines he mentions Nero as *longa Caesarum serie tumentem*.

¹ Vindex was apparently governor of Aquitania, in which there were no

regular legionary troops.

² The 6th (*Victrix*). At the beginning of the reign of Tiberius, Spain, ‘having been recently conquered,’ was occupied by three legions (Ann. iv. 5). After the conquest of the Cantabrians, so often spoken of by Horace, Spanish resistance ended : *Servit Hispanae vetus hostis orae = Cantaber sera domitus catena* (Hor. Od. iii. 8, 21-2).

³ These were the 4th (*Macedonica*) and the 22nd (*Primigenia*), in the upper army, which were the first to revolt against Galba (chap. 55).

*which you approved, what you would have had otherwise, under a former Prince. For it is not with us as with nations that have Kings over them, where domination belongs to one house, all others being slaves: you will have to rule over men who are neither fit for entire liberty, nor yet can tolerate entire servitude.'*¹

So spake Galba, as though he were making Piso Emperor; the rest addressed him as though he were Emperor already.

Calm bearing of Piso.

The company straightway turned to Piso; and though every eye was fixed on him, we are told that he gave no sign of triumph or agitation. Unmoved in face and bearing, as though the Empire were something open to him rather than a thing that he desired, he addressed his father the Emperor respectfully, and spoke with modesty about himself.

Consultation held.

A consultation then took place as to whether the adoption should be proclaimed from the rostra, or in the Senate, or in the camp: the last plan was resolved upon as more complimentary to the soldiers, whose goodwill, though it would be ill to acquire it by largesses or solicitation,² was not to be despised if won by worthy methods.

Meanwhile the Palace³ was surrounded by an expectant crowd, eager to learn the great secret;

¹ We can imagine the gusto with which Tac. must have penned a speech like this, which gave him the opportunity of making a Roman Emperor pose in the guise of a philosopher, and enunciate the pedantic impracticabilities of the Stoic school. Galba's speech is rather that of an idealist schoolmaster than of a practical statesman; there is no sentence in it which shows any appreciation of the realities of his own position, or of the necessity of any kind of action. Piso was an excellent young man, but he was about the worst choice that could have been made. He had lived mostly in exile; he was out of touch with public affairs in the city; he

had had no military experience to recommend him to the Praetorians. Mere innocence and passive fortitude were not exactly the instruments fitted for ruling the Rome of A.D. 69.

² The word *ambitus* is of frequent occurrence in Tac. Meaning originally 'a circumference' (as in ii. 3, and Germ. 37), it came to be used of the 'going round' or 'canvassing' practised at candidatures for public office. In the *Histories* it is used with various shades of meaning, but always in a bad sense, to denote intriguing for influence or favours of any kind.

³ For the meaning of the word *Palatium*, see n. on chap. 32.

futile attempts to suppress the rumour did but spread it abroad the more.

18 The 10th of January was a day thick with rain, and disturbed by thunder, lightning, and unwonted terrifying signs in the heavens. In ancient times, the observation of such things¹ would have broken up a public assembly; but it did not deter Galba from proceeding to the camp. Perhaps he despised such matters as affairs of chance; perhaps he thought that the decrees of fate, although signified to us, are not to be avoided.

Galba announces his decision in the camp on the 10th of Jan.;

Addressing the soldiers in full assembly, he told them, with imperatorial brevity, that he had adopted Piso:—*In this he was following the example of Augustus, and the military custom whereby each soldier picked his fellow.*² After that, fearing that if he made no mention of the German revolt they would think it more serious than it really was, he volunteered the information that, *The 4th and 22nd Legions had been led astray by a few sedition-mongers; but their misconduct had not gone beyond cries and clamour; they would soon return to their duty.*

No winning words, no promise of rewards, accompanied this speech; nevertheless the Tribunes,

his speech is coldly received.

¹ This refers to the well-known custom under the Republic of watching the heavens—*servare de caelo*—on the day when Comitia were to be held. It was a principle of Roman augury that no assembly of the people could be carried on if thunder or lightning were observed, or a storm came on. And not only so, but superior magistrates had the right to watch (*spectare*) for such signals. If such a magistrate announced that he was thus watching the heavens, it was held that the will of the gods was as yet unrevealed; and so long as that was so, no business could go on. This happy device, resorted to when it was thought likely that the assembly might carry some rash and ill-considered measure, may be said to

have fulfilled in some measure the functions of a second chamber, by enforcing delay and consideration. It was, in fact, the Roman form of 'closure'; with this difference, however, from the system of closure as practised in our own more enlightened country, that it was not used for the purpose of passing measures without discussion, but of giving opportunity for further discussion of them at a future opportunity.

² In allusion to a primitive practice in the raising of levies whereby each man, when giving in his name for an emergency levy, named another, whose name was next taken, and so on with the rest (Livy ix. 39, and x. 38).

and the Centurions, and such of the soldiers as stood near, gave a favourable response. The rest preserved a gloomy silence, as though they had lost, after a war, the donative which had become an established right even in time of peace. And there is no doubt that the slightest liberality on the part of the miserly old man would have won them over: his old-world rigour and inflexibility—qualities to which we are no longer equal—proved his ruin.

Proceedings in the Senate.

In the Senate, Galba spoke as baldly, as briefly, 19 as to the soldiers. Piso spoke graciously, and was applauded; by many with sincerity, by those who were unfriendly to him, with effusion; the majority, who were neither friends nor foes, and thought only of their own interests without care for the public good, were officiously obsequious.

Envoys to be sent to the German army.

During the four days¹ which intervened between his adoption and his murder, Piso neither did anything nor said anything in public. Fuller news of the German revolt kept coming in every day; and as in Rome all news, if it be bad news, is readily caught up and believed, the Senate resolved to send envoys to the German army. Whether Piso should accompany the embassy, was discussed in private: the mission, it was thought, would be more imposing if Piso added to it the dignity of a Caesar, while the other envoys would represent the authority of the Senate. It was proposed also that Laco, the Praetorian Prefect, should be included; but Laco negatived the proposal. The Senate had left the choice of the names to Galba; but he showed the most lamentable weakness in inserting, omitting, or substituting names, every one

¹ *I.e.* from January 11 to 14, inclusive.

intriguing to go or to remain as his own personal hopes or fears inclined him.

20 The finances next claimed attention.¹ Nero had lavished in donations twenty-two hundred million sesterces ;² and after full consideration it was resolved to demand restitution from those to whom the deficiency in the treasury was due.³ Galba accordingly ordered the recipients to make repayment, permitting each to retain one-tenth part of what he had received. But these persons had scarcely a tenth part remaining to them, having squandered other people's money with the same lavishness as their own; the most rapacious and dissolute of their number had neither lands nor capital left; nothing indeed save the means for the gratification of their vices. A Commission of thirty Roman Knights was appointed to call in the money—a new kind of authority, whose numbers and intriguing methods made them a burden to the city.⁴ Everywhere auctioneers and bidders; ⁵ the city rang with law-processes: yet it caused general joy to see those whom Nero had enriched becoming as poor as those whom he had despoiled.

Condition of the finances :

Nero's benefactions revoked.

¹ The matters mentioned in this chapter, which must have occupied a considerable time, represent all that Tac. chooses to tell us of the events in Rome during the first months of Galba's reign. Having announced that his history was to begin with Jan. 1, A.D. 69, he gives us no regular dates before that time. The short glimpse of Galba's financial measures is enough to explain the general irritation which they created among all classes.

² Somewhere about twenty millions of our money.

³ Restitution was demanded even from those to whom the properties had been sold or gifted (Suet. Galba 15; Dio lxiii. 14; Plut. Galba 16). The auctions and actions with which the city rang were connected with the selling of the various properties concerned.

⁴ The words *ambitu ac numero*

onerosum have been differently interpreted, some supposing the burden to be that placed on the Commissioners. But Tac. was not in the least likely to dwell upon the labour imposed on a commission that offered opportunities of gain or of earning favour to its members. The commission was an infliction upon the citizens, not only from its numbers, which enabled them to extend their inquisitions, but also from the amount of solicitation and intriguing—probably not without corruption—which those numbers entailed. Suet. puts their number at fifty. Some edd., less well, explain *numero* of the number of persons from whom money had to be exacted.

⁵ At auctions of public property the purchasers were called *sectores* or 'cutters,' because the goods were sold in lots.

Four
Tribunes
cashiered.

About this time four Tribunes were dismissed the service; Antonius Taurus and Antonius Naso from the Praetorians; Aemilius Pacensis from the City Cohorts; and Julius Fronto from the night-watchmen. But these dismissals did nothing to improve the rest; they only aroused the fear that while a timid and crafty policy singled out a few for punishment, all alike were objects of suspicion.

Fears and
hopes of
Otho.

Meanwhile Otho, who had nothing to hope for in a tranquil state of affairs, and whose projects depended on disorder, was pricked on by various considerations. His prodigality would have been burdensome to an Emperor, his lack of means was scarcely endurable for a private citizen;¹ he was jealous of Piso, and hated Galba. He conjured up fears also to add fuel to his desires:—

He had been too formidable for Nero; he must not wait to be sent a second time to honourable exile in Lusitania.² Rulers always hated and suspected those marked out as their successors. This had injured him in the eyes of the aged Galba: it would injure him still more in those of a youth whose naturally gloomy temper had been embittered by years of banishment. His very life was in danger; let him be up and doing before Galba was firm in his seat, while Piso's position was still insecure. Times of transition were favourable to great enterprises; when inaction was more dangerous than temerity, not a moment should be lost. Death came to all alike by nature; but whereas some were forgotten by posterity, others were gloriously remembered. And if both innocent and guilty had to come to

¹ Plut. alone tells us the amount of Otho's debts. He puts them at 50 million drachmas. As the drachma was about equal to the denarius (= 4 sesterces), the total would be 200

million sesterces, roughly equivalent to £1,700,000. Otho himself acknowledged, *nisi Principem se stare non posse* (Suet. Galb. 5).

² See n. on chap. 13.

the same end, it was the mark of a man of mettle to deserve his fate.

22 Otho's mind was not effeminate like his body. His intimate friends and freedmen, who enjoyed a license unknown in private houses, appealed to his sensuous nature by dangling before him the delights¹ of Nero's court, with its freedom as to marriage, adultery, and other king-like indulgences:—*Such pleasures*, they reproachfully told him, *would be his, if he was bold enough to seize them; if he did not act,² they would fall to others.*

He is urged on by his friends;

He was urged on also by the astrologers—a tribe of men who betray the great, and befool the credulous³—a tribe that in our city will always be proscribed, and always hold their ground. These men assured Otho that the stars portended some new commotion, and a year of glory for himself. Many of these persons had been admitted to Poppea's secret counsels—the worst of all advisers for an Imperial consort. One of them, Ptolemy by name, had accompanied Otho into Spain and had predicted that Otho would survive Nero. Taking advantage of the credit gained by this prophecy,⁴ and of the comparisons made in common talk between Galba's old age and the youthfulness of Otho, this man persuaded Otho

and by the astrologers.

¹ Here the context shows that the word *luxus* is used in the sense of profligacy, and not merely in that of extravagance, as *luxuria* in chap. 30, 5: *falluntur quibus luxuria specie liberalitatis imponit; perdere iste sciet, donare nesciet.* See n. on chap. 13.

² The word *quiescenti* is used here in the same emphatic sense as in chap. 15, line 9, 'if he did nothing'; 'if he took no steps to assert himself.'

³ The words *potentibus* and *sperantibus* are usually taken in a general sense, as by C. and B., 'the powerful' and 'aspiring.' But the context suggests that the reference is more defi-

nite, and is meant to apply to the use made of astrologers alike by emperors, and by persons conspiring against emperors. For the fruitless attempts made to expel from Rome the tribe of astrologers, see Ann. ii. 32; xii. 52; and Hist. ii. 62. See also Ann. ii. 27, and Mayor's note on Juv. xiv. 248.

⁴ Tac. at times speaks contemptuously of those who believe in divinations, signs, and wonders: but his frequent mention of such things, not always in a spirit of scepticism, is a proof that he is by no means destitute of a certain respect for them.

that he was to be called to Empire ; and Otho, with that readiness to believe in the mysterious which characterises the human mind, accepted these predictions as matters of certain knowledge, communicated by the Fates themselves.

His ambition leads him to meditate a crime ;

his previous intrigues.

Nor did Ptolemy fail to urge Otho to take the short step which in such cases separates an ambition from a crime. How far the idea was new to him is uncertain. He had for some time been courting the favour of the soldiers, either in hopes of the succession, or to pave the way for some daring attempt. During the journey from Spain, on the march or during halts, he would address the older men by name, calling them 'comrades,' in remembrance of their companionship on Nero's suite ; recognising some, asking after others, and offering help in money or in interest. Then from time to time he would let fall hints of grievances against Galba, such as would unsettle the minds of the common soldiers, who grumbled at laborious marches, scanty food, and severe discipline. Accustomed to be conveyed on ship-board to the lakes of Campania or to the cities of Achaia,¹ they could ill endure having to struggle under arms over the Alps and the Pyrenees, or along endless stretches of high road.

Machinations of Maevius Pudens.

The flame thus kindled in the soldiers was fanned by Maevius Pudens, a near relative of Tigellinus.² This man proceeded to win over men of restless temper

¹ There is an obvious confusion in this passage. The last words as to long marches over Alps and Pyrenees can only apply to the troops that accompanied Galba from Spain ; the journeys to Campania and Achaia (in reference to their accompanying Nero on his artistic or pleasure trips) were only true of the Praetorians whom Galba found in Rome on his arrival.

² The infamous Tigellinus, joint commander of the Praetorians under Nero, who ministered to that Emperor's worst excesses. His power under Nero provoked the famous lines of Juvenal, *Pone Tigellinum, taeda lucebis in illa = Qua siantes ardent qui fixo gutture fumant*, etc. (Sat. i. 155-6). For his death and character, see below, chap. 72.

or such as were short of money, and ready to plunge into new ventures; and by degrees he went so far that whenever Otho dined with Galba, he would give a present of a hundred sesterces, under name of dinner-money,¹ to every member of the cohort which was on duty. Such a present was tantamount to a public largesse; Otho added to its effect by secret bribes to individuals; and so audacious did he become in the methods of corruption that when Cocceius Proculus, one of the body-guard,² had a dispute with a neighbour in an affair of boundaries, he bought the whole of the neighbour's property with his own money and presented it to Cocceius. This passed unnoticed by the lethargic Laco, blind alike to the notorious and to the unseen.

25 The execution of the intended crime Otho entrusted to his freedman Onomastus. This man gained over Barbius Proculus and Veturius—the latter a subaltern,³ the former watch-word officer⁴ of the body-guard—and having assured himself in various interviews both of their cleverness and of their daring, he loaded them with presents and

Plot formed by Onomastus and two common soldiers.

¹ The practice here alluded to is that of the *sportula* (literally a 'basket'), in which clients and dependents used to receive their daily dole of food, instead of being invited to the patron's table as in former days: *nunc sportula primo = Limine parva sedet turbae rapienda togatae* (Juv. i. 95). In course of time a money payment of 100 quadrants had been substituted for the *cena recta* (or 'square meal') of early times. This practice had been extended to the guards in attendance on the Emperor, and Otho took advantage of it as a cover for administering bribes to the soldiers.

² The *speculatores* were a picked body of men, a certain number of whom were attached to each legion, and apparently to each cohort. They were used to carry dispatches (ii. 73), and for other special services, among which

was the duty of attending on the Emperor as a personal body-guard. When Otho left Rome for the war, *ipsum comitabantur speculatorum lecta corpora cum ceteris praetoriis cohortibus* (ii. 11, 18), which passage shows that they formed a corps by themselves. They seem to have been a mounted force (Hardy, *Studies in Roman History*, *Second Series*, p. 155).

³ The *optio* was an inferior officer chosen (*optatus*) by the tribune or centurion to act as his representative, to assist him in his duties, and to take his place if through sickness or other cause he had to be absent. See Veget. ii. 7. He was evidently a sort of officer; yet in the next sentence Tac. styles him a common soldier (*manipularis*).

⁴ The *tesserarius* was the man who received the watchword from the tribunes and handed it round.

with promises, and gave them money wherewith to try the temper of others. Thus did two common soldiers undertake to transfer the Empire of the Roman people: and they transferred it. Only a few were let into the plot. These worked upon the wavering minds of the rest by various devices. Those in the higher ranks were told that they were regarded with suspicion as owing their promotion to Nymphidius;¹ the common herd were appealed to through their anger and disappointment at the long-continued withholding of the donative. Some were fired by recollections of Nero, and a longing for the license of former days; all alike were afraid of changes in the conditions of military service.

The infection spreads throughout all the troops in the city;

The infection soon spread to the Legions and the auxiliaries, whose minds had been unsettled by the news of the disaffection of the German army; and so ripe were the evil spirits for sedition, so ready were even the loyal to wink at it, that on the 14th of January they would have carried off² Otho on his way home from dinner had they not been deterred by the uncertainties of a night enterprise, and the difficulty of securing joint action among drunken men quartered all about the city. It was no care for their country, which they were deliberately preparing to stain with their Prince's blood, that held them back: what they feared was that, in the darkness, some chance person might be presented to the soldiers of the Pannonian or German armies, who were mostly unacquainted with Otho, and might be proclaimed in his stead. 26

indication of it suppressed.

Indications of the coming outbreak were not wanting; but they were suppressed by those in the plot. Some hints of it came to Galba's ears; but Laco

¹ See above, chap. 5, 7.

² *I.e.* to proclaim him Emperor.

made light of the affair. He had no knowledge of the temper of the soldiers; and being hostile to every proposal, however excellent, which did not emanate from himself, he obstinately shut his ears against those who knew.

27 On the 15th of January Galba was sacrificing in the Temple of Apollo,¹ when the soothsayer Umbricius announced, in the hearing of Otho, who was standing by, that the entrails were unfavourable, portending an imminent plot, and a foe within the house. Otho interpreted the omen in the contrary sense, as favourable to himself, and implying a prosperous issue to his enterprise. Shortly afterwards, his freedman Onomastus announced that his architect and contractors were awaiting him, this being the signal agreed upon to indicate that the soldiers were collecting, and that all was ready for the attempt. On being asked the reason of his departure, Otho pretended that he was about to buy some property which, being old and probably out of repair, had first to be inspected.

On Jan. 15
the con-
spiracy is
carried out.

Otho is
saluted as
Emperor by
23 soldiers
and is
hurried to
the camp.

So leaning on his freedman's arm, Otho proceeded through the palace of Tiberius to the Velabrum, and from thence to the Golden Milestone beneath the Temple of Saturn. He was there saluted as 'Emperor' by twenty-three soldiers of the body-guard. Alarmed though he was at the smallness of their number, they hurried him into a chair,² and with their

¹ Probably the famous Temple of Apollo vowed by Augustus during the war against Sextus Pompey, and dedicated in B.C. 28. The dedication is mentioned both by Propertius (ii. 31), who also describes it, and by Horace (Od. i. 31). It was immediately adjacent to the house of Augustus on the Palatine, and according to the most recent view, probably stood on the West half of that hill in close proximity to the *domus Tiberiana*. Attached to the porticus of the temple

were the celebrated Greek and Latin Libraries. For the exact position of the temple, see Platner's *Ancient Rome*, pp. 144-147.

² *I.e.* a *sella gestatoria* or sedan chair, originally used by women only, but under the Empire commonly used by men. The *sella* is usually contrasted with the *lectica*, in which the passenger lay at full length: *Lecticam sellamve sequar?* (Mart. x. 10, 7, cp. xi. 98, 11-12).

swords drawn carried him off. About an equal number of soldiers joined them on the way, some of them being in the plot, others following out of curiosity; some received him with shouts and brandishing of their swords;¹ others, ready to shape their sentiments according to the event, in silence.

The Tribune on duty at the camp was Julius 28
Martialis. Terrified by the extent and suddenness of the outbreak—fearing perhaps that the whole camp had been corrupted, and that to offer resistance would be death—he created the impression that he had been privy to it. The other Tribunes and the Centurions, in like manner, preferred present safety to duty with danger; and such was the condition of men's minds that this most disgraceful act of treason, though only brought about by a few, was approved of by many, and acquiesced in by all.

Irresolu-
tion of
Galba.

Galba meantime, knowing nothing, was busying 29
himself with his sacrifice, and importuning the Gods of an Empire that had already passed away from him, when word was brought that some Senator or other—unnamed at first, but before long affirmed to be Otho—was being carried to the camp. Then people who had encountered the procession poured in from all parts of the city, some in their terror exaggerating the danger, others again, flatterers to the last, making light of it. After a consultation, it was resolved to try the temper of the cohort on duty at the Palace: not through Galba himself, whose authority was to be reserved intact for graver measures, but through Piso. Having called therefore the soldiers together, Piso thus addressed them from the steps in front of the Palace:—

¹ *Gladiis* here has been unnecessarily changed by most edd. into *gaudiis*.

Piso addresses the cohort on guard at the Palace.

'This is the sixth day,¹ my comrades, since in ignorance of what might happen—not knowing whether the title were to be dreaded or desired—I was adopted as a Caesar. What shall be the fate of that adoption, for our house and for the state, lies in your hands. Not that I fear misfortune on my own account, seeing that I have had experience of adversity, and am learning at this moment that good fortune, no less than evil fortune, has its dangers; but I grieve for my father, for the Senate, and for the Empire itself, if we must needs either be slain to-day, or what is no less grievous for good men, be ourselves the slayers. In our recent troubles, it was our consolation that no blood was shed within the city,² and that the Empire changed hands without dissension; and my adoption seemed to make sure that even after Galba's death there should be no room for war.

30 *'I make no claim for myself on the score of either birth or character: and what need to speak of virtue in a comparison with Otho? The vices which are his only glory were ruining the Empire even when he was only an Emperor's friend. Should his gait and demeanour, should that womanish adornment of his person,³ give him a title to Empire? Let none deceive themselves because his extravagance⁴ wears the garb of generosity: he will know how to squander, he will not know how to give. He is already planning revelries and adulteries and gatherings of women in his mind; these are what he deems to be the prizes of Empire. The lust and the pleasure will be his; the shame and the dishonour will be for all;*

¹ *I.e.* the 6th day according to the Roman method of counting, including the day from which, as well as the day to which, the calculation is made. Piso was adopted on the 10th of Jan. (chap. 18), and he is now speaking to them on the 15th.

² Piso takes no notice of the thousands

slain during the approach to the city, chap. 6, 7.

³ The woman-like character of Otho's dress is mentioned by Suet. (Otho 12), and sneered at by Juv. (ii. 99).

⁴ *Luxuria* here can only mean extravagance; that is clear from the context. See n. on chap. 22.

for never yet did man use to noble ends a power evilly acquired.

'Galba was named Caesar by the consent of mankind ;¹ with your approval Galba has conferred that title upon me. If Republic, Senate, and People be but empty names, it is for your interest, comrades, that Emperors should not be chosen by the vilest of mankind. A mutiny of the Legions against their Generals is no unheard-of thing ; but your loyalty, your good name, have been to this day inviolate. It was Nero that abandoned you, not you Nero. And shall the Empire be bestowed by some thirty renegades and deserters—men to whom no one would entrust the choice of a Centurion or a Tribune ? Will you erect this into an example, and by acquiescence make the crime your own ? Such license will spread to the Provinces : and while we shall have to endure the consequences of their crime, those of the wars will fall on you. You will gain no more by shedding your Emperor's blood, than by being innocent of it ; and you will receive no less a donative from us for being true to your allegiance than from others for betraying it.'

Galba's
emissaries
to the
troops are
ill received.

The members of the body-guard having slunk away, the rest of the cohort received the speech well enough, and formed up under their standards : not, as was afterwards supposed, in order to conceal their treachery, but rather by chance, as happens in moments of disorder, and without any decided purpose. Celsus Marius was sent off to the picked Illyrian contingent,² which was quartered in the

¹ Here again, as above in chap. 4, the Roman Empire is identified with the human race.

² These chosen detachments seem to have been brought to Rome by Nero from the Pannonian or other armies with a view to some expedition to the East. In chap. 6 we hear of troops having been sent on by Nero to the

Caspian Gates for a war against the Albanians ; in chap. 9 of legions tarrying in Italy that had been brought over from Illyricum ; and in chap. 26 Pannonian and German soldiers are mentioned as being in Rome. In chap. 70 we learn that Caecina, on his descent into Italy, finds the Silian Horse (*ala Silitana*) stationed on the Po, who after

Vipsanian Portico;¹ and two senior Centurions, Amulius Serenus and Domitius Sabinus, were ordered to bring up the German force from the Hall of Liberty.² No reliance could be placed upon the naval Legion, which was full of wrath against Galba for having slaughtered their comrades on entering the city. Three Tribunes also — Cetrius Severus, Subrius Dexter, and Pompeius Longinus—proceeded to the Praetorian Camp, in the hope that the men might listen to better counsels at the beginning, before the outbreak had come to a head. The two former were assailed with threats; but Longinus was forcibly seized and disarmed, his loyalty to Galba, not merely as an officer, but as one of that Emperor's personal friends, making him specially obnoxious to the insurgents.

The naval Legion, without hesitation, joined the Praetorians; the Illyrian contingent presented their javelin-points³ to Celsus and drove him away. The German detachments wavered for some time. These men were still in a weak state of health. They had been sent out to Alexandria by Nero, and then brought back again; and they were grateful to Galba because since they had returned from their long voyage

servings under Vitellius in Africa, had been a *Nerone ut in Aegyptum prae-mitterentur exciti, et ob bellum Vindiciis revocati*. That Nero had intended a journey to Egypt is mentioned both by Tac. (Ann. xv. 36) and by Suet. (Nero 19); Suet. adds that he only put it off on the very day on which he had intended to start, deterred by evil omens. Mommsen (Rom. Prov. ii. 61) supposes that the journey was connected with a meditated expedition against the Ethiopians; others with the expedition to the Caspian Gates against the Albanians, also mentioned by Suet. (Nero 19).

¹ This portico, called also the *Por-*

ticus Polae (Pola being the sister of Agrippa) formed the W. side of the *Campus Agrippae*, a pleasure-ground laid out by Agrippa to the E. of the present Corso, and dedicated by Augustus in B.C. 7 (Platner's *Ancient Rome*, p. 477, 2nd ed.).

² This building, anciently used for the offices and archives of the censors, seems to have been situated on, or near, the site of Trajan's Forum. It was in it that Pollio established the first library in Rome (Platner, 2nd ed., p. 275).

³ Reading *infestis* instead of the *in-cestis* of M.

invalided he had been paying every attention to their comfort.

The Palace invaded by a cowardly and senseless mob.

By this time the entire populace,¹ slaves among the number, were invading the Palace, clamouring for the death of Otho and the destruction of the conspirators, just as if they were calling for some spectacle in the circus or the theatre; not considering, or indeed meaning, what they said, seeing that on the same day they were ready to cry out for the opposite with equal enthusiasm: they were but following the established practice of greeting the Emperor, whoever he might be, with extravagant and senseless acclamations.

32

After a feeble consultation,

Galba, meanwhile, was torn between two opinions. Titus Vinius advised him to remain within the Palace, strengthening the approaches and arming the slaves, rather than present himself to the infuriated soldiers:—

some recommending delay,

He should allow an interval to enable the disaffected to change their minds, the loyal to concert their measures. Crimes had to be done in haste; good counsels gathered strength by delay. And lastly, Galba could go equally well to the camp later on, if it were thought advisable; if he went now and repented of it, his return would be in the hands of others.

others urging instant action,

The others were for instant action, before the conspiracy, which was as yet feeble and confined to a few, should gather strength:—

33

That would make even Otho tremble, who, after slipping away by stealth and presenting himself to an army

¹ Tac. uses the exaggerated expression *universa plebs*. The word *Palatium* means properly the Palatine hill as a whole, the *Mons Palatinus*. But as the emperors made their home upon the Palatine, the word *Palatium* came to have the meaning of our 'Palace.' In this and other passages, however,

the word is used for the whole hill; in some passages it is not easy to decide what the meaning is. I have therefore thought it best to use the word 'Palace' in every case, with the same double meaning as the Latin *Palatium*, leaving the reader to judge by the context which meaning is intended.

ignorant of his purpose, was now learning, from their own cowardly delays and inaction, how to play the part of Emperor. What? Were they to wait until Otho had set his camp in order, invaded the Forum, and ascended the Capitol under the very eyes of Galba? Was their excellent Emperor with his gallant friends to shut himself up within the gates and thresholds of his own Palace, and endure a siege? What splendid help would be given by the slaves when once the united feeling of all that multitude,¹ and that first burst of indignation which counts for so much, had died away! The path of dishonour was the path of peril; if fall they must, let them go forth to meet the danger: so would they cast odium upon Otho, and win glory for themselves.

When Vinius combated these views, Laco threatened him with violence, being encouraged thereto by Icelus, who persisted in his private animosity, regardless of the public ruin.²

34 Galba hesitated no longer, and yielded to his more specious advisers. Piso was sent on before him to the camp³ because of his youth, his great name, and his recently acquired position: also because of his enmity to Titus Vinius—whether he really was hostile to Vinius, or that the enemies of Vinius⁴ would have it so: and indeed hatreds are readily believed in.

Galba resolves to leave the Palace.

¹ This refers to the applauding shouts of the mob at the Palace as described in chap. 32.

² For this sentence ('persisted—ruin') I am indebted to Messrs. Church and Brodribb's translation.

³ No writer but Tac. mentions this mission of Piso to the camp. The words which follow suggest that he may have been stopped on the way by the false rumour of Otho's death.

⁴ The meaning seems to be that as the Praetorians hated Vinius, they would be more likely to listen to Piso because it

was known that Piso was his enemy. Tac., however, throws a doubt upon the existence of any such feeling on the part of Piso, suggesting that such enmity may only have been invented as an excuse by Laco and Icelus, who were both enraged (*irati*) against Vinius. The difficult words *et facilius de odio creditur* have been little noticed by the commentators; they may either mean that the hatred view is the more probable view in itself, or that it is the one which people will be more ready to believe.

He is confirmed by a false rumour of Otho's death, and proceeds to the Forum.

Scarcely had Piso left the Palace when a rumour arrived, vague at first and unconfirmed, that Otho had been slain in the camp; before long, as is the way with gross falsehoods, people affirmed that they had themselves been present, and had witnessed the deed. The joy of some, the indifference of others, gained credence for the report: but many thought that it had been invented and made the most of by partisans of Otho who had mingled with the crowd, and who spread the welcome falsehood for the purpose of luring Galba out of the Palace.¹

Thereupon not only did the populace and the ignorant mob² break out into enthusiastic and extravagant applause, but a number of Knights and Senators also, throwing fear and caution to the winds, burst open the doors of the Palace, rushed in, and presented themselves to Galba, lamenting that vengeance had been taken out of their hands—a cowardly crew, as the event proved, full of big words and bold of tongue, but not one of whom would have dared to do anything in the moment of danger. Everyone asserted, no one knew; until at last, amid the dearth of true intelligence and universal acquiescence in the false, Galba was induced to don his cuirass,³ and being too old and feeble to stand up against⁴ the rush of the

¹ Suet. gives a very similar account (Galba 19). His story is that Galba, on hearing that Otho had reached the camp, rejected the advice given him to go there himself and quell the mutiny by his presence, resolving instead to call in the legionaries scattered about the city, and defend himself in the palace. Only on receiving the false news of Otho's death was he lured forth.

² In this and other places Tac. uses the terms *populus* and *plebs* together in a loose sense to denote the whole population, higher and lower—all below the rank of equites—'all commoners,' or

'all common people,' as we might say. So in chap. 36, 7, *non tamquam in populo ac plebe*.

³ Suet. says that the cuirass was of linen, *loricam tamen induit linteam* (Galba 19); but the *thorax* or *lorica* usually worn by Emperors was of ornamental metal, as we see upon their statues. In chap. 41 Tac. tells us that Galba's murderers could only hack at his legs and arms, as his breast was protected.

⁴ The reading of M here (*sistens*) must be taken in the sense of *resistens*. Galba suffered greatly from the gout, both in the hands and feet (Suet. 21);

crowd, was raised aloft in a chair. He was met in the Palace by Julius Atticus, a soldier of the body-guard, who, showing him a blood-stained sword, cried out that he had slain Otho. '*By whose order, comrade?*'¹ asked Galba, ever resolute in checking military license; being one whom no threats could terrify, no blandishments corrupt.

36 It was now evident that all in the camp were of one mind; and such was the enthusiasm of the soldiers, that not content with carrying Otho in procession, shoulder-high, they placed him between the standards² on the platform on which the golden statue of Galba had stood not long before, with the ensigns of the maniples grouped around him. No Tribune or Centurion was permitted to come near him; the private soldiers ordered every officer to be watched. The camp rang with clamour and tumult and mutual exhortation, the men not uttering the various cries of feeble flattery that are heard among the people or the plebs, but as soon as they caught sight of any of the legionaries who were flocking in, they would seize them by the hand, throw their arms round them,³ and placing them beside Otho,

Enthusiasm for Otho in the camp;

but we can hardly suppose that he was 'scarcely able to stand'; nor can the word *turbæ* be satisfactorily explained with that meaning.

¹ Otho similarly addresses his soldiers by the familiar term *commilitones* in chap. 37. Suet. tells us that Augustus never used the term *commilito* when speaking to, or of, his soldiers; nor would he allow his sons or stepsons so to address them, considering that such a form of address was *ambitiosius*: *i.e.* that it smacked of courting the favour of the soldiers more than was consistent with military discipline or his own dignity (Aug. 25).

² From this passage it is clear that the word *signa* denoted the standards of the cohorts, which were grouped together at the headquarters. The

vexillum was the standard or ensign of particular detachments: here it is used of the standards of the maniples. Hence the term *vexillarii* applies to any body of men serving under a special *vexillum* of their own, and is constantly used in the *Histories* to denote detachments of a legion, as distinguished from the legion as a whole. The word *vexillarii* is also the term applied to veterans who, after sixteen years' service, were discharged from the ranks of the legion, but were retained for fighting purposes, with certain privileges, under a separate *vexillum*.

³ Edd. are in doubt whether *armis* is the Abl. of *armus* or of *arma*. If from *armus*, it is the single place in Tac. where that word occurs; and careless as he sometimes is in matters

dictate to them the oath of allegiance ; commending now the Emperor to the soldiers, now the soldiers to the Emperor.

Nor did Otho fail to do his part. Laying his finger on his lip,¹ and stretching forth his hand, he blew kisses to the multitude—playing the slave that he might become the master. When the whole naval Legion² had taken the oath, feeling now confident of his strength, and thinking that he should inflame as a body the men whom he had incited one by one, he took his stand upon the rampart and thus began:—

‘I know not, comrades, in what character I come before you ; for I can neither bear to call myself a private citizen when you have named me Princeps, nor yet Princeps while another man is Emperor.’³ And by what title shall you be called, so long as men know not whether you hold in your camp an Emperor of the Roman People or an enemy? Have you heard that my death and your chastisement are called for in the same breath? So plain is it that you and I must needs stand or fall together ! Who knows but that with that selfsame clemency

of this kind, it is somewhat strange that in such a context, dealing with soldiers in their camp, he should have used *armis* of anything but of their weapons. No doubt *complecti armis* is peculiar ; but Tac. may have had Virg. Aen. xii. 433 in his mind (*Ascanium fuis circum complectitur armis*), where, however, there is a similar uncertainty as to the meaning of *armis*.

¹ This passage seems to confirm the derivation of *adoro* (= the Greek *προσκυβεῖν*) from the word *os*, in reference to the raising of the hand to the mouth in token of veneration. So Plin. xxviii. 2, 5, § 25, *In adorando dextram ad osculum referimus totumque corpus circumagimus, quod in laevum fecisse Galliae religiosius credunt*. And so Apuleius Apol. 56, *adorandi gratia manum labris admovere*. In the East the prevalent mode of salutation from

an inferior to a superior is to raise the right hand to the brow ; if great respect is to be shown, both hands are raised.

² This was the legion embittered against Galba by his harsh treatment of them and their fellow sailors, chaps. 6 and 31.

³ This chap. is remarkable for the way in which the terms *princeps*, *principatus*, and *imperium*, *imperator*, *imperare*, are used convertibly, with the same meaning and in the same context. This does away with the idea that in ordinary use the word *imperator* had special reference to the Emperor's military powers, and *princeps* to his civil functions. Here the soldiers are even said to have nominated the *princeps* : *nec privatum me vocare sustineo princeps a vobis nominatus, nec principem alio imperante*. See note on chap. 1.

of his which butchered unprovoked those thousands of innocent soldiers, he has already promised our destruction? A horror comes over my mind whenever I think of that lugubrious entry—Galba's one and only victory—when in the sight of all Rome he ordered the decimation of the prisoners whose prayer for surrender he had granted.

'Entering the city under these auspices, what glory did he bring to the Principate but that of slaying Obultronius Sabinus and Cornelius Marcellus in Spain; Betius Cilo in Gaul; Fonteius Capito in Germany; Clodius Macer in Africa; Cingonius on the high road, Turpilianus in the city, Nymphidius in the camp? Where is there a Province, where a camp, that has not been stained, or, as he would say, amended and reformed, with blood? What others call crimes, he calls remedies; and by a misuse of words, he gives to cruelty the name of strictness, to avarice that of economy, while he describes as discipline the penalties and outrages inflicted upon you. During the seven months that have elapsed since Nero's death, Icelus¹ has grasped more plunder than was squandered² by the Polycliti, the Vatini, and the Aegiali. Titus Vinius has been more rapacious, more unbridled, than if he had himself been Emperor. He has held us as cheap as if we had been another man's slaves; he has trampled upon us as if we were his own. The fortune of that one

¹ For Icelus, see chap. 13; Polyclitus was the notorious freedman of Nero, whose mission to Britain to report upon the victorious Suetonius in A.D. 67 is so indignantly recorded in Ann. xiv. 39.

Vatinius, the cobbler of Beneventum, from whose long nose a common delf jug with four nozzles took its name (Juv. v. 46, Mart. xiv. 96). According to Tac. he was one of the most misshapen, scurrilous, powerful, wealthy, and venomous of the minions about Nero's court (Ann. xv. 34).

Of Aegialus nothing is known: even

the name is uncertain. M gives it as Aegialius, a name otherwise unknown.

² The reading is uncertain. M gives *perierunt*, for which Ritter conj. *perdid-erunt*, which gives a simple, but not very forcible, meaning. Meiser, changing *quod* into *quoad*, and putting it before *perierunt*, brings out the powerful sense 'as much as the Polycliti plundered in the whole course of their lives.' Some such meaning seems called for by the words *septem menses*, which imply a contrast with some other period of time.

man could have supplied you with that donative which is daily cast in your teeth, and which you will never receive!

'And now, lest we should place any hope in his successor, Galba has brought back from exile a man whose gloominess and avarice he judged to be similar to his own. You yourselves, my comrades, witnessed the portentous storm by which even the Gods signified their wrath at that ill-starred adoption. The Senate and the People of Rome think with you: they look to your valour, for it is from you that good counsels derive all their strength, without you even the best are powerless. I am not calling you to war, nor yet to danger; all the armies of Rome are with us. Galba's one cohort, clad in civic garb,¹ is not defending him now, but holding him a prisoner. And when once that cohort shall look on you—when once it shall receive the countersign from me—the only rivalry among them will be as to who shall deserve most at my hands. There is no room for tarrying in an enterprise which can only be commended when accomplished.'

Otho arms
the sol-
diers.

Otho then ordered the armoury to be opened.² The men took up their arms at once, without regard to rule or rank, or to the distinguishing marks of legionaries and Praetorians, fitting themselves promiscuously with the helmets and shields of auxiliaries. No Tribune or Centurion gave the command; every man was a leader and instigator to himself, the bad finding their chief incitement in the sorrowing faces of the good.

Confusion
and divided
counsels

By this time Piso, alarmed by the roar of the gathering sedition, and by the cries that were now

¹ The soldiers of the cohort on guard, being within the city, wore the civilian *toga* instead of the military *sagum*. They carried their swords and spears, but had neither shields nor helmets.

² It appears from this passage that the arms of troops quartered in the city

were only served out to them when occasion required. So when the 17th cohort was ordered up from Ostia (chap. 80), the tribune in command had to open the armoury from which to equip the men.

among
Galba's
friends.

reaching into the city, had overtaken Galba, who had now issued from the Palace and was approaching the Forum. Marius Celsus had brought back no good news;¹ whereupon some advised Galba to return to the Palace, others to make for the Capitol, others again to take his stand upon the rostra. But the greater number did nothing but object to the proposals made by others; and as happens when things go wrong, no plan was approved till the moment for its execution had gone by. Some say that Laco, unknown to Galba, proposed to put Titus Vinius to death: whether to please the soldiers by his punishment, or because he believed him to be one of Otho's accomplices; or possibly out of mere hatred. But the time and the place made him hesitate: massacre, once begun, would be hard to keep within bounds. Terrified messengers also, and the flight of his followers, upset his plans; for the zeal of those who had been so forward in protesting their fidelity and their courage had by this time oozed away.

40 Galba was swayed to and fro by every movement of the surging multitude;² the basilicas and the Temples around were packed with spectators of the woeful scene. No word was uttered either by the people or the plebs;³ dismay sat on every face, and every ear was turned to listen. There was no uproar, there was no calm—only a silence

Scene in
the Forum;

¹ On his return from his unsuccessful mission to the Illyrian force, chap. 31. See n. on chap. 14.

² Plutarch graphically describes the confusion caused by the contending shouts of the crowd, some crying to go back, some to go on, amid which Galba's litter swayed backwards and forwards as though tossed in a tempestuous sea (Galba 26).

Plut. gives exactly the same metaphor in an expanded form: τοῦ φορείου καθάπερ ἐν κλύδωνι δέυρο κίκεϊ διαφερομένου καὶ πυκνὸν ἀπονεύοντος. This is one of the passages which prove in the clearest way that Plut. and Tac. drew from a common source.

³ Here again we have the phrase *populi aut plebis* to denote the entire multitude, high and low.

like that of some great terror or some mighty passion.

Otho's
troops
burst
into it.

Otho, however, was informed that the plebs were arming, and he ordered a force to hurry at full speed to anticipate the danger. And so a body of Roman soldiers burst at full gallop into the Forum, dispersing the crowd, laying about them with their swords, and trampling Senators under foot, just as if they were about to hurl a Vologeses¹ or a Pacorus from his ancestral throne, and not speeding along to slay their own aged and defenceless Emperor. For neither the sight of the Capitol, nor the sanctity of the Temples around it, nor thought of former and future Emperors, deterred them from perpetrating a crime which no successor could leave unavenged.²

Galba cast
upon the
ground and
slain.

As soon as this armed force appeared upon the scene, the standard-bearer of the cohort in attendance upon Galba (they say his name was Atilius Vergilio) tore off the Emperor's effigy,³ and dashed it to the ground. At this signal all the soldiers declared openly for Otho; the populace fled; the Forum was left deserted; swords were drawn against all who hesitated. Galba's panic-stricken bearers got as far as the Curtian pool,⁴ where he was thrown from his chair and rolled upon the ground. 4 I

¹ The spelling *Vologæsus* is given throughout the *Histories* by M, but as in the *Annals* M usually has *Vologeses*, I have preferred to adhere to that spelling. Vologeses was the formidable king of Parthia against whom Corbulo had to exercise all his arts as a general and a diplomatist during the years A.D. 51 to 64, as described in the *Annals*, books xii-xv. Vologeses was son of Vonones II., probably succeeded him in A.D. 51, and reigned until A.D. 77 or 78 (Ann. xii. 14 and n.). Pacorus was the brother of Vonones, appointed by him king of Media (Ann. xv. 2).

² The meaning is clear enough, but

from his love of the direct and the positive Tac. has put it into an illogical form which does not admit of translation. The words *scelus cuius ultor est quisquis successit* literally mean 'a crime of which the avenger is whosoever has succeeded,' i.e. a crime sure to be avenged by a successor, whoever he may be. Instead of confining himself to the particular case of Galba, Tac. lays it down as a general maxim that the murder of an Emperor is a crime which any successor is sure to avenge.

³ A small medallion likeness of the Emperor was one of the ornaments attached to the standard of a cohort.

⁴ The lake or pool of Curtius, so well

His last words were variously reported, as each man's hatred or admiration prompted. Some say that he imploringly asked, *What harm had he done? Might he not have a few days to pay the donative?* The more common account is that he presented his throat to his murderers, bidding them *be quick and strike, if so they thought best for the Commonwealth.*¹ But the murderers cared not what he said: nor is it known for certain who struck the fatal blow. Some say it was a veteran² called Terentius; others one Laecanius; but the generally received account is that a soldier of the 15th Legion, Camurius by name, cut his throat right through³ with one stroke of his sword. Others inflicted ghastly wounds on his arms and legs (his breast being protected by the cuirass), or with brutal ferocity struck at his now headless body.⁴

His last words.

42 Then Titus Vinius was attacked. About him too it is disputed whether instant terror rendered him speechless, or whether he protested that Otho had not ordered his death—a speech which may have been either an invention prompted by fear, or a confession that he was privy to the plot. The latter view—that he was an accomplice in the crime of which

Titus Vinius slain.

known for the famous story told by Livy vii. 6, was in the middle of the Forum, close to the spot on which Caesar's body was burnt. The foundations of the temple built by Augustus on that site are still to be seen. Close by, nearer to the Palatine, was the Temple of Vesta mentioned below.

¹ Dio, Suet., and Plutarch all agree in making these the dying words of Galba. As they are not unanimous as to the other sayings of a more craven character, we may fairly give Galba, with his well-known character for *severitas*, the benefit of the doubt. According to Suet., his first words to his murderers were *Quid agitis commilitones? Ego vester sum et vos mei* (Galba 20).

² An *evocatus* was properly a time-expired soldier, allowed to remain on in

the service with special privileges. Augustus established in connexion with the Urban troops a special body called *evocati Augusti*, who performed special duties, and ranked next to the centurions. Suet. tells us that Galba chose a body of picked young *equites* to serve as a body-guard, under the name of *evocati*; possibly the man here mentioned may have been one of these.

³ The word *hausisse* seems here to be used in the sense of *perforasse*.

⁴ Plut. has given some gruesome details as to how Galba's head was treated. Here and elsewhere Tac. shows a fine taste in omitting revolting details. Suet. revels in narrating horrors, without a word of moral reprobation.

he had been the cause¹—is more in harmony with his previous life and reputation. He was struck down in front of the Temple of the Divine Julius by one blow on the back of the leg, and soon afterwards a legionary called Julius Carus ran a sword right through his body.

Noble conduct of Sempronius Densus.

This age of ours witnessed on that day a noble 43 example set by Sempronius Densus, a Centurion in a Praetorian cohort, whom Galba had attached to Piso as a guard. Facing the armed soldiers with a drawn dagger, he reproached them with their crime; and diverting their attention to himself, partly by shouting, partly by showing fight, he gave Piso, though already wounded, an opportunity of escaping from his murderers, and taking refuge in the Temple of Vesta. Admitted by a public slave,² who concealed him out of compassion in his own chamber, Piso owed a respite from the death which awaited him, not to any reverence for the sanctity of the spot, but to the secrecy of his hiding-place, until two soldiers came up whom Otho, in his eagerness for Piso's death,³ had specially dispatched to kill him. These two men—one of whom, Sulpicius Florus, belonged to a British cohort, and had recently been presented by Galba with the citizenship, while the other, Staius Murcus, was a member of the body-guard—

Death of Piso.

¹ This seems a somewhat harsh and illogical judgment. If Vinius was the 'cause of the treason against Galba,' it can only have been that his conduct, as Galba's confidential adviser, had made Galba unpopular. And in chap. 48, where Tac. gives a more favourable account of Vinius (scarcely compatible with his description of him in chap. 6 as *deterrimus mortalium*), he speaks of his friendship for Galba as being the cause of his ruin (*mox Galbae amicitia in abruptum tractus*).

² The slaves attached to a temple

were called *aeditui*, and their lodging or chamber *contubernium*. When the Capitol was stormed and burnt by the Vitellians, Domitian saved himself by taking refuge, in the same way as Piso, in the *contubernium* of the *aedituus* (iii. 74).

³ Reading *ardentis* with Heins., F., etc. instead of the *ardentes* of M. According to Plutarch, when Otho was given Galba's head, he exclaimed: Οὐδὲν ἔστι τοῦτο, ὡς συστρατιῶται, τὴν Πείσιωνός μοι κεφαλὴν δείξατε (Galba 27).

dragged out Piso and slew him¹ on the steps of the Temple.

44 No death, they say, was so welcome to Otho as that of Piso, no head did he gaze upon with the same insatiable delight : whether it was that his mind was then for the first time relieved of all anxiety, and he had leisure to rejoice ; or that recollection of Galba's dignity and of his own friendship with Titus Vinius disturbed even that cruel soul with gloomy visions, whereas he thought it right and proper to rejoice at the death of his enemy and rival Piso.

Exultation
of Otho.

The heads were stuck upon poles and carried along among the standards of the cohorts beside the legionary eagle,² while those who had done the deed, or had been present at the doing of it, and who truly or falsely boasted as though they had done something great and glorious, exultingly held out their blood-stained hands. Vitellius afterwards discovered no less than a hundred and twenty petitions from persons who demanded rewards for some signal service rendered upon that day : all these persons he ordered to be searched out and put to death,³ not out of any respect for Galba, but in accordance with the established usage by which princes secure safety for the present and vengeance in the future.

Indignities
to the dead.

45 And now you would have thought that there was a new Senate and a new people. There was a rush to the camp, every man struggling to get before

Enthusiasm for
Otho ;

¹ M reads *trucidatus* ; most edd., horrified at two past participles coming in the same sentence with no substantive verb, read *trucidatur*. But in view of Tac.'s habitual contempt for the substantive verb any change seems unnecessary ; and indeed he would be a daring critic who would assert that any solecism was too bold for Tac.

² As we see from this passage, the eagle was the standard of the legion ; while *signa* is used of those of the cohorts. See n. on chap. 36.

³ This is perhaps the one act of the reign of Vitellius with which we can feel some sympathy, apart from the motive suggested by Tac. in the concluding words of the chapter.

his neighbour, or to reach those in front of him. They reviled Galba, they commended the choice of the soldiers, they covered Otho's hand with kisses: the more false their professions, the more profuse their protestations.¹ Otho was gracious to every one, calming with voice and hand the excited and angry temper of the soldiers. The men clamoured for the death of Marius Celsus, Consul Designate, who had been a loyal friend to Galba to the last, and whom they hated for his energy and his innocence as though these were baneful qualities. That they were looking for a beginning of plunder and massacre, and the destruction of all good citizens, was evident; and though Otho could have ordered such a crime, he was as yet powerless to prevent it. Pretending therefore to be wrathful against Celsus, he ordered him into chains; and declaring that he would be more severely punished in the future, thus rescued him from immediate danger.

he attempts
to restrain
the violence
of the
soldiers.

The Prae-
torians
choose
their own
officers.

From that moment everything was done at the soldiers' bidding. The Praetorians chose their own Prefects. One of these was Plotius Firmus,² a man who had risen from the ranks, and was now commander of the night watch: he had been a partisan of Otho's when Galba was still alive. With him was associated Licinius Proculus, who from his intimate friendship with Otho was supposed to have abetted his designs. As Prefect of the City they appointed Flavius Sabinus,³ following in this the choice of Nero,

46

¹ This passage is well illustrated by Juvenal: '*Sed quid = Turba Remi?*' *Sequitur fortunam ut semper, et odit = Damnatos* (Sat. x. 72)

² This man remained true to Otho to the last. It was he who passionately urged Otho not to throw away his life and desert his faithful soldiers (ii. 46).

³ Elder brother of the Emperor Vespasian. Appointed by Otho, sub-

mitting to Vitellius, and attempting to negotiate with the latter during his brother's victorious advance on Rome, he had a most difficult part to play, and finally fell a victim to Vitellius' want of good faith, or powerlessness to fulfil his promises. The exciting story of his last days is given in iii. 65-74; his character in iii. 75.

under whom he had held the same office ; but many also bore in view the fact that he was Vespasian's brother.

The next demand was that the payment of fees to Centurions for exemption from duty should be abolished. These fees had become an annual tax on the common soldiers ; and the result of paying them to the Centurions was that a fourth part of every maniple might be absent on furlough, or be loitering about the camp. No one thought of the amount of the burden, or by what means the money was raised. Now the soldiers bought this relief from duty by pilfering and plundering, and by performing various servile offices. If a soldier was well off, he was worn out with work and harsh treatment until he found the money for his exemption ; after he had spent all he had, and had learnt habits of idleness into the bargain, the once rich and eager soldier returned poor and dispirited to his duty. In this way man after man was impoverished and demoralised, until all were ready to plunge into mutiny and faction, and even into civil war. Otho was afraid that any act of liberality to the men might cost him the goodwill of the Centurions ; so he undertook to make an annual payment of this exemption-money out of his own private treasury. This excellent arrangement was adopted by all good Emperors, and became an established rule of the service.¹

Payment of exemption fees to Centurions ;

fees abolished, but made good by the Emperor.

The Prefect Laco, sent to an island by way of banishment, was there slain by a veteran soldier whom Otho had sent on before him for that purpose. Marcianus Icelus, being a freedman, was executed in public.

Death of Laco.

¹ Vitellius continued the practice (chap. 58).

Flatteries
in the
Senate ;
Imperial
powers
conferred
upon Otho.

The crowning horror of this day of crime was 47
the rejoicing in which it ended.¹ The City Praetor
convened the Senate ; the other magistrates outdid
one another in their flatteries. The Fathers hurried
to the Senate-house, and conferred upon Otho the
Tribunician power,² with the name of Augustus, and
all the other Imperial titles. Everyone strove to
efface from memory the opprobrious epithets which
had been so freely lavished on him. How far these
rankled in his mind was not known : whether he had
renounced his anger, or only postponed its gratifica-
tion, was left uncertain by the shortness of his reign.

Permission
to bury the
bodies.

Having been carried through the blood-stained
Forum over heaps of dead to the Capitol, and thence
to the Palace, Otho gave leave for the bodies to be
buried. Piso's remains were laid out by his wife
Verania and his brother Scribonianus,³ those of Titus
Vinius by his daughter Crispina : they searched out
and bought back the heads which the murderers had
preserved for sale.

Piso hap-
pier in fame
than for-
tune.

Piso had nearly reached his thirty-second year. 48
He had been happier in fame than in fortune. Two
of his brothers had been slain : Magnus by Claudius,
and Crassus⁴ by Nero. He had passed many years in
exile ; he had been a Caesar for four days ; and his
hurried adoption gave him only this advantage over
his elder brother that he was killed before him.

¹ This sentence shows a rare feeling for the pathetic, and testifies to the sensibility of Tac. Very similar is the passage in ii. 70, where on the occasion of Vitellius' visiting the horrors of the battlefield of Bedriacum, he tells us, 'Not less revolting was that part of the road which the people of Cremona had strewn with laurels and with roses, building up altars as if in honour of an Oriental monarch.'

² For the importance of the *tribu-*

nicia potestas, and the reasons why Augustus and his successors clung to it as an essential element in their authority, see n. on Ann. i. 2, 1.

³ This is the elder brother, Crassus Scribonianus, referred to by Galba in his speech to Piso, chap. 15. He was put to death under Domitian.

⁴ This brother (M. Licinius Crassus Frugi) was accused by Regulus and put to death under Nero (iv. 42).

Titus Vinius had lived to the age of fifty-seven, with a varying reputation. He came of a Praetorian family on the father's side; his maternal grandfather had been among the proscribed. In his first military service, under the Legate Calvisius Sabinus, he had gained a bad name. That General's wife had taken an evil fancy to pay a visit to the camp; she entered it by night disguised as a soldier, and having with a like wantonness assisted at the setting of the watch and other military functions, was shameless enough to commit adultery in the headquarters. The man accused of this offence was Titus Vinius;¹ he was therefore put into chains by the Emperor Gaius. Released soon afterwards on the change of government, he passed from one public office to another without a check, and after holding the Praetorship, did good service in command of a Legion. Not long afterwards he was taxed with the slave-like offence of stealing a golden cup from the table of the Emperor Claudius; next day Claudius ordered that Vinius, alone of all the guests, should be served on earthenware.² Nevertheless, as Proconsul, he governed Narbonese Gaul with strictness and integrity;³ soon after which his friendship with Galba dragged him to destruction. Bold, crafty, and ready-witted, he pursued every object on which his mind was bent, whether good or evil, with equal energy. His will was set aside because of the greatness of his fortune; whereas Piso died in such poverty that his last wishes were respected.

Character
and career
of T.
Vinius.

¹ This legate Calvisius Sabinus (cos. A.D. 26) was accused in connexion with the same affair on his return to Rome; both he and his wife committed suicide (Dio lix. 18).

² A curious instance of imperial

humour, not unsuited to the pedagogic character of Claudius.

³ Another instance of the just and strict government of a province by a man who bore the worst character in Rome itself (see n. on i. 9).

Shameful
treatment
of Galba's
body.

Galba's body lay for a time neglected, and exposed, under cover of night, to many gross indignities, until his steward Argius, one of his chief¹ slaves, gave it a humble sepulture in Galba's private gardens. The head had been stuck on a pole and maltreated by the caterers and attendants of the camp; it was found next day in front of the tomb of one Patrobius—a freedman of Nero's who had been put to death by Galba—and placed among the remains of the now cremated body.²

Character
of Galba.

Such was the end of Servius Galba. He had lived through seventy-three years of prosperity under five princes, more fortunate in the reigns of others than in his own. Born of an ancient and noble family, possessed of great wealth, he was a mean between extremes: less noted for the possession of virtues than for lack of vices; neither indifferent to fame, nor greedy of it: sparing of his own money, not covetous of that of others, he was a miser as regarded that of the State. His friends and his freedmen, if he happened to fall upon good ones, he treated with unquestioning confidence; with culpable blindness if they were the reverse. His illustrious birth, and the terror of the times, served as a screen for his indolence, and let it pass for wisdom. In his prime he had gained military fame in Germany; he governed Africa wisely as Proconsul, Hither Spain not less justly in his later years. As a private citizen, he seemed too great for a private station: deemed by all men fit for empire—had he never reigned.³

¹ Reading *primoribus*, rather than *prioribus* with M.

² Suet., as usual, gives the ugliest form to the story, and says that Otho himself presented the head to the camp-followers to be carried round the camp with insult (Galba 20). Tac. evidently

did not believe this story, as he attributes to Otho a respectful admiration of Galba's dignified character (*maiestas*).

³ This is one of the most famous characterisations of Tacitus. 'The estimate of Galba's character is just and discriminating. He was a type of the

50 The city was still agitated by the recent atrocious crime, as well as alarmed because of Otho's past character, when a fresh terror was added by the report of the rising of Vitellius. Before Galba's murder the news had been suppressed: only the Upper German army was supposed to have revolted.¹ But now it was openly lamented, not only among the Senators and Knights—men who have some concern in, and some regard for, the public weal—but even among the common herd, that fate should have chosen out two men, infamous above all others for sensuality, sluggishness, and extravagance, to bring about the ruin of the Empire.

News arrives of the rising of Vitellius;

Thinking no more of the recent horrors of peace, men's minds went back to the Civil Wars, how Rome had been captured by her own armies, how Italy had been laid waste, and the Provinces plundered; the names of noted public disasters—of Pharsalia and Philippi, of Perugia and Mutina²—were ever on their lips:—

better class of the Roman nobles of his day; harsh and cruel, but upright in a way; a capable subordinate, though not equal to supreme command, or to the burden of empire' (Spoonner). For a discussion of the famous epigram, *Omnium consensu capax imperii nisi imperasset*, see *Introductio* to vol. ii. of this edition, p. lvii.

¹ Vitellius had entered upon his command in Lower Germany in the last days of November, A.D. 68; the army of that province had taken the oath of allegiance to Galba sullenly and reluctantly upon the 1st of Jan. On the same day the upper army had broken into open revolt, throwing down and destroying the images of Galba, and had taken the oath of allegiance to the Senate and People of Rome. This news was brought to Vitellius at Cologne on the same evening; Fabius Valens arrived there upon the 2nd, and proclaimed Vitellius Emperor. On the 3rd, the upper army, giving up the names of Senate and People, came over

also to Vitellius (chaps. 52-57). The adoption of Piso, hurried on by the news of the German revolt (which arrived *paucis post Kalendas Januariis diebus*, chap. 12, 1), took place upon the 10th of January. By that time Galba had not yet heard of the assumption of empire by Vitellius; for in addressing the soldiers on the same day, he made light of the rising, telling them that it was a mere matter of discontent in two legions—the 4th and the 22nd (chap. 18)—those being the two legions which began the movement in the upper army upon Jan. 1 (chap. 55).

² Pharsalia, the battle in which Caesar overthrew Pompey, was fought in B.C. 48; Mutina in B.C. 43, when the consuls Hirtius and Pansa fell in the battle with Mark Antony (*Cum cecidit fato consul uterque pari*, *Ov.* Trist. iv. 10, 6), and Philippi in B.C. 42, when the Republic received its death-blow by the routing of Brutus and Cassius by Mark Antony and Octavianus (Augustus). And finally the terrible siege of Perugia, so patheti-

it excites
universal
conster-
nation.

The whole world, it was said, had been well-nigh overturned even when good men were struggling for the mastery.¹ The Empire had survived the victories of Julius Caesar and of Caesar Augustus; the Republic would have been saved under Pompey and Brutus: but were men now to visit the temples to pray for an Otho or a Vitellius? How impious would be the prayers, how unholy the vows, for either of the combatants in a conflict as to which one thing only could be affirmed—that whichever conquered would be the more detestable of the two!

Some had
thoughts of
Vespasian.

Some indeed turned their thoughts to Vespasian, and the armies of the East: but though Vespasian would be better than the other two,² they shuddered at the idea of another war and further butcheries. Vespasian's reputation too was none of the best; of all the Emperors up to his time he was the only one whose character changed for the better.³

Causes of
the Vitel-
lian move-
ment.

And now let me relate the beginnings and the 51
causes of the Vitellian movement. Having destroyed Julius Vindex with all his forces, the army had become elated with the plunder and the glory of a campaign which had given them, without toil or danger, a victory rich in spoil; and deeming pay not so good as prize-money, they hankered after campaigns and battles. They had long endured a hard unprofitable

Discontent
in the

cally alluded to by Propertius, i. 22, 3-4 (*Si Perusina tibi patriae sunt nota sepulcra = Italiae duris funera temporibus*), took place in B.C. 41. That siege had been brought about by the mysterious rising of Antony's brother Lucius, which was in fact the first move in the long-drawn conflict between Antony and Octavianus, fought out at length in the historic battle of Actium B.C. 31.

¹ It is noteworthy that Tac. here speaks of the contest between Caesar and Pompey being *de principatu*: a term not technically used before the time of Augustus. But the contest between Caesar and Pompey was eminently a contest 'for the First Place.'

² Vespasian's official career differed from that of such men as Otho and Vinus who showed their best qualities away from Rome; for during his government of Africa, according to Tac., he made himself *famosus invisusque* (ii. 97, where see n.). But no such condemnation is passed upon his government in the East.

³ The logic of this passage is indefensible as it stands. What Tac. actually says is that Vespasian was the only one of his own predecessors who improved in character after becoming Emperor. Spooner well compares Milton's 'fairest of her daughters Eve.'

service, in an unkindly clime and country, and under rigid discipline:¹ but the discipline which is so sternly maintained in peace becomes relaxed in civil war, when corruption is plied on either side, and treachery goes unpunished. They had men, arms, and horses in abundance, both for service and for show; and whereas before the war with Vindex each army had been confined to its own Province, knowing only its own centuries and squadrons, that war had brought the Legions together. Having discovered their own strength² and that of the Gauls, they were on the lookout for new wars and fresh quarrels, no longer calling the Gauls their allies, as formerly, but regarding them as conquered enemies.

German
armies;

Nor did they fail to find support in that part of Gaul which borders on the Rhine,³ where the people called urgently for an attack upon the Galbians—that being the name which they had invented in their contempt for Vindex. Full of wrath against the Sequani and the Aedui and other communities in proportion to their wealth, the soldiers revelled in the idea of storming cities, ravaging fields, and rifling homes, their wrath being stirred against those tribes, not merely because of their rapacity and arrogance—faults common to all powerful communities—but also because of the impudent and insulting manner in which they had boasted of the favours they had

causes of
discontent
also among
the Gauls.

¹ The contrast between the hardships of service in the German armies and the comfort and quiet enjoyed by the legions in the East is well brought out in ii. 80, where Mucianus inflames the Syrian army against Vitellius by telling them that he had resolved *ut Germanicas legiones in Syriam ad militiam opulentam quietamque transferret, contra Syriacis legionibus Germanica hiberna caelo ac laboribus dura mutarentur*. See also Ann. xiii. 35.

² The concentration effected in the

war against Vindex, and the sight of their own numbers, had given confidence to the German army. In contrast to this, Tac. points out the weakness of the Illyrian armies for evil purposes in consequence of their being scattered (*nec vitiiis nec viribus miscebantur*, chap. 9).

³ The Lingones, Remi, and Treveri are the tribes referred to. It was upon these that Civilis in his rebellion brought all his arts to bear in order to detach them from Rome.

received from Galba, one of which was the remission of a fourth part of their tribute.¹

Alarming
rumours
circulated.

A report also had been insidiously circulated and heedlessly believed that the Legions were to be decimated,² and all the ablest Centurions discharged. Alarming news poured in from every quarter; sinister intelligence came from Rome; the hostility of Lyons also, which adhered obstinately to Nero, gave birth to many rumours. But the chief material for fiction and for credulity lay in the wrath and the fears of the army itself, which looked to its own numbers and felt secure.

Arrival of
Vitellius in
Lower
Germany;

In the last days of November in the preceding year Aulus Vitellius had arrived in Lower Germany,³ and had carefully inspected the Legions in their winter quarters. He restored many officers to their rank; he removed some marks of disgrace and mitigated others.⁴ These things were done mainly for

he courts
popularity

¹ This passage shows how unwise and short-sighted had been Galba's action in Gaul. He had rewarded certain states, and punished others, simply in view of the assistance which they had given to, or withheld from, Vindex; and yet he had been obliged to consent to the putting down of that rising with the whole force of Rome, and had himself risen to power in consequence of its suppression. His whole action in Gaul had inflamed the natural ambition of its tribes to the highest extent, and helped to produce the state of feeling among the Gauls which supported Civilis in his great rebellion against Rome. At the same time, it must be admitted that he did much to foster the animosities among the Gauls themselves which did so much to frustrate the objects of that rebellion.

² The word 'decimation' is constantly misused in an exaggerated sense by modern writers as though it were equivalent to 'destruction' or 'annihilation.' Thus the *Westminster Gazette* of Dec. 22, 1913, writes, 'The old Liberal party of Ulster, once a force to be reckoned with, has been decimated.'

It is but a fragment of its former self.' It is well, therefore, to point out that though the punishment of decimation was cruel enough and blind in its operation, it only meant the putting to death of every tenth man selected by lot. Such a punishment might be inflicted on a force which had disgraced itself before the enemy.

³ The boundaries of the provinces of Upper and Lower Germany having been given above, it will be well to mention here the distribution of the legions in each. In Upper Germany, the 21st Legion (*Rapax*) was stationed at Vindonissa, the 4th (*Macedonica*) and the 22nd (*Primigenia*) at Mogontiacum (*Mainz*). The full force of Upper, as of Lower, Germany, had been four legions; but owing to the troubles in Britain, the 2nd Legion (*Augusta*) had been removed to that province by Claudius, and had not been replaced. In Lower Germany, the 1st Legion (*Germanica*) was at Bonn, the 16th (*Gallica*) at Novesium, while the 5th (*Alauda*) and the 15th (*Primigenia*) were at Vetera, the lowest station on the Rhine.

⁴ Galba had evidently dealt with the

popularity; but in some instances Vitellius showed judgment and impartiality in reversing promotions or degradations due to the mean and mercenary policy of Fonteius Capito. More importance was attached to his acts than to those of an ordinary Consular Legate. Severe judges thought him lacking in dignity; but his supporters called him kind and generous because of the reckless profusion with which he gave of his own, or lavished what belonged to others: in their anxiety to confer upon him the Empire,¹ they pronounced his very vices to be virtues.

with the
army.

There were many well-disposed and loyal men in the two armies; but there were many also who were active for evil. Conspicuous among these for cupidity and audacity were the two legionary Legates, Alienus Caecina² and Fabius Valens.³ Valens

Caecina
and Valens
incite Vi-
tellius to
aim at
Empire :

German army as he had dealt with the Gallic tribes, punishing those who had been most active against Vindex, and therefore less favourable to himself. Vitellius on his arrival at once sets himself to reverse these arrangements, reinstating all officers degraded or 'noted' by Galba. The army, sore and indignant at its recent treatment, and at having to accept an Emperor from the inferior Spanish army, at once responded to the new arrangements, and were ready to regard Vitellius as something more than an ordinary General. This immediate turn of affairs gives point to the satire of Tac. 's phrase when he tells us that Galba thought he had dealt sufficiently with the situation by recalling Verginius and appointing Vitellius to Lower Germany, *id satis videbatur* (chap. 9).

¹ M here reads *imperandi*: I follow Nipperdey in reading *imperi dandi*, which gives obviously the meaning required. Fisher reads *imperitandi*, which he supports by *cupidine imperitandi*, iv. 25. But in that passage the word *imperitandi* is used in a natural, but quite different, sense, of the desire of the Gallic states to form an empire for themselves, not (as required in the passage before us) of a desire to confer empire upon another.

² Aulus Alienus Caecina was legate in command of a legion in Upper Ger-

many, Fabius Valens of one (the 1st legion) in Lower Germany. These two men, of whom we shall hear much in the sequel, and to whose vices Tac. does such ample justice, were the pillars of the Vitellian cause. Whatever their private character—and Caecina proved himself in the end a double-dyed traitor—there can be no question of the ability which they displayed in bringing rapidly into Italy the two main divisions of the Vitellian forces. Each at the head of a large army, with a march in the one case of 700 miles, in the other of 250 miles; each crossing the Alps at a difficult season of the year, by different passes, they arrived in time to secure all Italy north of the Po before Otho could establish himself on that all-important base of operations; and finally combined their forces so promptly and to such good effect as to inflict a decisive defeat on the flower of Otho's army before his lingering legions from Moesia and Pannonia could appear upon the scene to help him. These great operations give one a high idea of the organisation of the Roman armies, which enabled them to be ready for war on a great scale at such short notice.

³ It will be remembered (see chap. 7) that Fabius Valens, along with Cornelius Aquinus (the legionary legates) had murdered Capito without orders

was incensed against Galba because the latter had shown no gratitude for his services in informing him of the uncertain attitude of Verginius, and crushing the designs of Capito.¹ He now urged Vitellius to take advantage of the enthusiasm of his army:—

speech of
Valens.

His reputation stood high everywhere; Flaccus Hordeonius would not stand in his way; Britain would support him; the German auxiliaries would do the same. The Provinces were disaffected; the aged Emperor only held his power on sufferance; it would soon slip out of his hands. Let Vitellius only throw his arms wide open² and meet Fortune half-way. Verginius had done well to hesitate; of equestrian birth,³ with a nobody for his father, he would have been as unfit to undertake Empire as he was prudent in refusing it. But Vitellius came of a father who had been thrice Consul, and had held the Censorship with Caesar for his colleague⁴—honours which thrust imperial dignity upon him, and would rob him of all security in a private station.⁵

These arguments stirred the desires, rather than the hopes, of the inert Vitellius.

from Galba; either because he was meditating a rising on his own account, or because (and Tac. seems to incline to this view) he declined to listen to their own treasonable proposals. Cornelius Aquinus is not heard of again after chap. 7; his place seems to have been taken by Caecina.

¹ Valens thus seems to have played a most important part in the elevation of Galba. Galba could have done nothing without the support or the acquiescence of the German army. It was only the hesitation of Verginius that gave Galba a chance of empire; and the man who assured Galba of that hesitation, and perhaps helped to confirm it, may have justly considered himself as the Emperor-maker, and have felt aggrieved by any want of gratitude shown to him. Not one single step of policy did the dully-virtuous Galba take to secure what Tac. calls elsewhere *subsidiâ dominationi* (Ann. i. 3).

² The *sinus* here is the fold or folds of the *toga*. As the arms of a toga-clad Roman could not be thrown open without expanding the folds of the toga, the phrase 'expanding the folds of the toga' is equivalent to 'welcoming with open arms.' Mr. Fyfe takes the metaphor as a nautical one, translating 'if only you will clap on full sail.'

³ His modest birth was no doubt one of the main reasons which deterred Verginius from accepting the offer made to him by his troops. Vespasian was the first to make it credible that any man not of the highest birth might make his way to empire.

⁴ Lucius Vitellius, the father, had been cos. in A.D. 34, 43, and 47; and censor along with Claudius in A.D. 47.

⁵ This whole passage reads more like a series of notes jotted down by a shorthand reporter than a regularly composed speech.

53 In Upper Germany the affections of the soldiers had been won by Caecina, who was young and handsome, of huge stature and erect carriage, possessed of immoderate ambition and with a clever tongue. As Quaestor in Baetica he had vigorously embraced the cause of Galba, who appointed him, young as he was, to the command of a Legion. Discovering afterwards that he had been guilty of peculation, Galba ordered him to be prosecuted: indignant at the affront, and reckless of all consequences, Caecina resolved to work confusion,¹ and cover up his private injury under public disaster.

Caecina popular with the army of Upper Germany; his character and career.

Nor were seeds of disaffection² lacking in the army. It had fought to a man against Vindex; it had not gone over to Galba until Nero's death, and even in taking the oath of allegiance it had been anticipated by the forces³ of Lower Germany. The Treveri and the Lingones, and other tribes whom Galba had harassed with harsh edicts and confiscations of lands, had mingled freely with the Legions in their winter quarters. Hence seditious conferences had been held; intercourse with the people of the country had relaxed military discipline; and the feeling in favour of Verginius was ready to turn to the advantage of any one else.

His army is ready to follow his lead.

54 Now the Lingones,⁴ in accordance with an ancient

Incident of

¹ The forcible phrase *miscere cuncta* is a favourite one with Tac. and can scarcely be translated. It implies a reckless and lawless readiness to throw everything into confusion, to work general havoc, to upset everything and everybody, in the hope that the past may be wiped out, and something come out of it to the agitator's advantage.

² The metaphor involved in the phrase *semina discordiae* is a favourite one with Tac., and is not always correctly used. Thus we have *ni semina belli restinxisset* (iv. 80); *semina futuri*

exitii (Ann. iv. 60); *haud ulla civitas intacta seminibus eius motus fuit* (Ann. iii. 41), etc.

³ The Latin here has *vexilla*. That word, as we have seen, used by itself, generally means 'detachments' of a legion; but here the word is used of the whole lower army. It is employed instead of *exercitus* or *legiones* because the oath of allegiance was taken before each maniple, whose standard was a *vexillum*.

⁴ The word *civitas* is used sometimes for a tribe as a whole, sometimes for its

the Lin-
gonian
envoys.

custom, had sent to the Legions a gift of two hands clasped together, as a token of amity. As the envoys passed through the headquarters and the men's tents, they assumed an appearance of squalor and dejection, complaining now of their own wrongs, now of the favours conferred¹ upon neighbouring States; and having thus gained an attentive hearing, they inflamed the minds of the soldiers by dwelling on their dangers and their wrongs, until they were verging on a state of mutiny. Thereupon Hordeonius Flaccus ordered the envoys out of the camp; and to keep their departure quiet, he bade them leave by night. This caused an ugly rumour to get abroad that the envoys had been killed;² and that, if the men did not look to themselves, those of their number who had been most forward in proclaiming their grievances would be slain in the dark, unknown to anybody.

Secret com-
pact among
the
Legions.

Upon this the Legions made a secret compact with each other, into which the auxiliaries were also admitted—though at first the fact that the auxiliary horse and foot were encamped around the Legions gave rise to a suspicion that an attack on the latter was being meditated. The auxiliaries now joined in the scheme even more heartily than the others, bad men finding it easier to combine for war than to promote harmony in time of peace.³

chief city. The three Northern provinces of Gaul were organised upon a system of cantons, not of towns, as other provinces: there was only one colony, Lugdunum (*Lyon*) in the whole of those provinces. Hence the names of many French towns are derived from the name, not of the ancient city, but of the tribe of which it had been the headquarters. Thus the Treveri gave their name to *Trèves*, the Remi to *Reims*, the Bituriges to *Bourges*, the Parisii to *Paris*, and so on.

¹ These have already been mentioned

in chap. 8, 4 as consisting of *dono Romanæ civitatis et in posterum tributî levamento*.

² Similarly the riot among the troops at Ostia (chap. 80) was caused by a suspicion created among the men in consequence of an order injudiciously given by the commander during the night.

³ Tac.'s favourite contrast of the words 'peace' and 'war' has led him here into a rather frigid antithesis. So in chap. 63, line 11.

55 In Lower Germany, however, the Legions took the customary oath of allegiance to Galba, though with much hesitation, upon the 1st of January.¹ Few applauding voices were heard among the higher ranks; the rest were silent, each looking for some daring move on his neighbour's part: for men are by nature slow to lead where they will be quick to follow. The Legions themselves were by no means of one mind. The 1st and the 5th were so entirely out of hand that some of the men pelted the images of Galba with stones; while the 15th and 16th, though looking round for an outbreak to begin, confined themselves to threats and murmurs.

Yet on Jan.
1st the
Lower
Army
swears
allegiance
to Galba;

In the Upper Army, on that same 1st of January, the 4th and 22nd Legions,² which were wintering in the same camp, broke in pieces the images of Galba, the 4th taking the lead, the 22nd after some hesitation joining in; yet not wishing to appear wanting in respect to the Empire, they coupled the oath of allegiance with the now obsolete names of the Senate and People of Rome. Not a Legate, not a Tribune, made any effort on behalf of Galba; some of them indeed, as happens when disorder occurs, took a prominent part in fomenting it. Yet no one made a regular speech from a tribunal: for as yet there was no one in whose interest such services could be rendered.³

on the
same day
the Upper
Army
breaks out
against
him.

56 The Consular Legate Hordeonius Flaccus looked

Inertness of

¹ This refers to the regular annual ceremony on the 1st of January, on which day, ever since the time of Tiberius, the whole army took the oath of allegiance to the Emperor.

² The 4th and 22nd legions were quartered at Mogontiacum (*Mainz*).

³ The somewhat enigmatical Latin phrase, *neque enim erat adhuc cui imputaretur* depends upon the special meaning of the word *imputare*, 'to

put down an item in an account.' If the item be put down on the debtor side, it confers on the debtor an obligation to repay: so that to say 'there was no person against whom such services could be reckoned' is equivalent to saying, 'there was no one as yet in whose interest such services could be rendered'; and therefore no one from whom gratitude could be demanded in return.

Hordeonius
Flaccus.

on at this disgraceful scene.¹ He did nothing to quell the sedition, nothing to hold back waverers or to encourage the well-disposed: inert and cowardly by nature, he was only innocent because imbecile. Four Centurions of the 22nd Legion—their names were Nonius Receptus, Donatius Valens, Romilius Marcellus and Calpurnius Repentinus—attempted to protect the images of Galba; but they were forcibly dragged off by the soldiers and put into chains. After that, all sense of duty disappeared; no man remembered his former oath; and, as is usual in seditions, the side of the majority became the side of all.

News of the rising reaches Vitellius that same night;

On the night of the 1st of January, Vitellius was at dinner in the Agrippinensian Colony when a standard-bearer of the 4th Legion came in, reporting that the 4th and the 22nd Legions had thrown down the images of Galba, and had taken the oath of allegiance to the Senate and People of Rome. Such an oath seemed unmeaning; so it was resolved to seize fortune at the turn, and to present an Emperor to the army. Vitellius dispatched envoys to the Legions and to their Legates, informing them that:—

he accepts the situation, and issues a proclamation to the army.

The Upper Army had revolted from Galba; they must therefore either make war upon the rebels, or, if they preferred peace and concord, choose an Emperor of their own: it would be less hazardous to accept a Prince than to search for one.

Valens and his army salute Vitellius as Emperor;

The nearest winter-quarters were those of the 1st Legion;² the most active of the Legates was Fabius Valens. This man rode in to the Colony next day at

¹ Tac. has already told us of the contempt in which Hordeonius was held in the upper army which he commanded—*senecta ac debilitate pedum*

invalidum, sine constantia, sine auctoritate (chap. 9).

² The 1st legion was at Bonn (iv. 25); Fabius Valens was its legate.

the head of the legionary and auxiliary cavalry, and saluted Vitellius as Emperor. The example was followed with immense enthusiasm by all the Legions of the Province,¹ and on the 3rd of January the Upper Army, abandoning the specious names of Senate and People, came over to Vitellius: it was easy to see that for the past two days it had ceased to be at the disposal of the Republic.²

With equal enthusiasm the inhabitants of the Agrippinensian Colony, the Treveri, and the Lingones, made proffers of men, horses, arms, and money, according as each could be of service either in person, means, or abilities. Nor was this zeal confined to the principal men in the Colonies or the camps—men who had abundance of means and who might hope for great things from victory—but all through the maniples even the common soldiers handed in, in lieu of money, their allowances, their bosses, their belts, and the silver ornaments of their accoutrements, in an outburst of enthusiasm and³ greed.⁴

58 Having commended the soldiers for their ardour, Vitellius distributed among Roman Knights the offices of the Imperial household⁵ hitherto held by freedmen; he paid the exemption fees to Centurions

zeal of the Colony, the Treveri, and others in his cause.

Vitellius makes various appointments; his concessions to the soldiers.

¹ *I.e.* Lower Germany.

² *I.e.* were not disposed to render obedience to the present Government at Rome. They were 'out of hand.'

³ At first sight it is tempting to substitute *vel* (Wölfflin) or *aut* (Halm) for the *et* of M; but it is more after the manner of Tac. to suggest that the men were actuated by both motives at the same time.

⁴ Some would translate *instinctu* 'promptings from without,' as distinguished from *impetu* 'promptings from within.' But the word *instinctus* in Tac. when used by itself always refers to feeling from within; where the prompting is from without, a genitive

is always added, as *instinctu decurionum* (chap. 70; and so Ann. i. 32; xv. 49). Exactly similar to the present phrase is *furere quodam et instinctu* (Hist. ii. 46).

⁵ There were three principal officers in the Imperial household; (1) *Procurator a rationibus*, the keeper of accounts; (2) *ab epistulis*, the secretary; and (3) *a libellis*, the officer who attended to petitions. These offices continued to be filled by freedmen up to the time of Hadrian, after which they became part of a regular civil service, officered by equites. See n. on Ann. iv. 6.

out of the private Imperial treasury; and while he yielded for the most part to the savage demands of the soldiers for the punishment of individuals, he eluded them in a few cases by a pretence of imprisonment. Pompeius Propinquus,¹ Procurator of the Belgic Province, was put to death at once. Julius Burdo, the commander of the German fleet,² was adroitly taken out of the way: the army was exasperated against him for having accused and plotted against Fonteius Capito,³ whose memory was held in honour by the soldiers. In their present state of fury, Burdo might have been openly executed; but he could only be pardoned by a stratagem.⁴ He was accordingly kept in custody, and not released until the anger of the soldiers had cooled down after the victory of Vitellius.

Meantime a scapegoat was granted them in the person of the Centurion Crispinus, who had dipped his hands in Capito's blood: his punishment was thus at once a more manifest concession to the men, and a cheaper sacrifice for the General.

Next, Julius Civilis⁵ was removed from danger. 59 He was a chief of great authority among the Batavians, and it was feared that that high-spirited people might take umbrage at his death. There

Julius
Civilis
removed
from
danger.

¹ This man was obnoxious to Vitellius as he had been the first to communicate to Galba the news of the revolt in the German army (chap. 12).

² This flotilla had been organised by Drusus, and enlarged by Germanicus; we shall see what an important part it played in the war with Civilis (books iv. and v.).

³ For Fonteius Capito and his proceeding see chap. 7.

⁴ *I.e.* the troops would have readily consented to his death; he could only be saved by a stratagem. So of Otho in regard to Marius Celsus: *Othoni*

nondum auctoritas inerat ad prohibendum scelus; iubere iam poterat (i. 45); Otho had authority enough to order the crime, but not to forbid it. It was more easy for a general dealing with an insubordinate army to order acts of severity than of mercy. In ii. 29 Valens feels it unsafe to inflict punishment, *gnarus civilibus bellis plus militibus quam ducibus licere.*

⁵ This was the famous Batavian who before the end of the year raised the standard of revolt against Rome. See iv. 13.

were also eight Batavian cohorts¹ in the country of the Lingones. These cohorts were the auxiliaries of the 14th Legion, but had separated from it in the disorders of the time:² their weight in the scale, on the one side or the other, would be a matter of great moment.

The four Centurions above mentioned—Nonius, Donatius, Romilius, and Calpurnius—were put to death by order of Vitellius; they were condemned for the most heinous of crimes in the eyes of rebels—that of loyalty.

Vitellius was now joined by Valerius Asiaticus, Legate of Belgic Gaul, whom he soon accepted as a son-in-law; and by Junius Blaesus,³ the Governor of Gallia Lugdunensis, with whom were the Italian Legion⁴ and the Taurian Horse,⁵ both quartered at Lyons. The troops in Raetia⁶ came over at once; even Britain did not hesitate.

Valerius Asiaticus and Junius Blaesus join Vitellius.

¹ We shall hear much of this unruly contingent. It had been left behind in the country of the Lingones when the 14th, to which it was permanently attached, had been summoned to Rome by Nero—for what reason is not exactly known. The 14th had greatly distinguished itself in the British war under Suetonius Paulinus. Sent into Dalmatia by Galba, it remained devoted to Otho as Nero's successor; Vitellius sent it back to Britain after the first battle of Bedriacum; and for the express purpose of paralysing its strength, once more associated it with the Batavian cohorts. The results, however, of their mutual hostility were so serious that the Batavian cohorts were again separated from it and sent to Germany, where they became a main contributing cause to the rising of Civilis. See i. 64, ii. 11, 27, 66, 69, and n. on iv. 12.

² The phrase *discordia temporum* seems to refer to the general lack of discipline which prevailed during the last months of Nero's reign.

³ This man seems to have been a supporter of Vindex. He was a grandson of the Blaesus, uncle of Sejanus, of

whom we hear much in the *Annals*. Tac. here speaks of him as *rector* of Lugdunese Gaul, that being a general term to denote the governor of a province, whether as *propraetor* or *proconsul*. How cruelly this man, who lavishly helped Vitellius to assume the imperial state, was put to death by Vitellius, is told in iii. 39.

⁴ This legion was known as the *Prima Italica*, raised by Nero (Dio iv. 24); but it must not be confounded with the *Legio Prima Germanica*, raised by Augustus after the defeat of Varus, in Germany A.D. 9; nor yet with the *Legio Prima Classica*, enrolled by Nero out of the *classarii*, and afterwards called *Prima Adiutrix* (chap. 6).

⁵ This was an irregular body of Horse called after the original raiser of the force—very probably the same Statilius Taurus who was afterwards *proconsul* of Africa. We may compare with it such bodies as our own famous 'Nicholson's Horse.'

⁶ Raetia was the most westerly of the four frontier provinces of the Danube. At its W. end it touched Upper Germany at the Lake of Constance, including

Trebellius
is driven
out of
Britain.

The Governor of Britain was Trebellius Maximus,¹ 60
a man hated and despised by the whole army for
his avarice and meanness. The feeling against him
had been inflamed by Roscius Coelius, Legate of
the 20th Legion, who had long been his enemy; and
now, on the occasion of the Civil War, the hostility
between the two men broke out more violently than
ever. Trebellius accused Coelius of insubordination,
and of breaking down discipline; Coelius retorted
that Trebellius had despoiled and impoverished the
Legions.² At length, amid the unseemly squabbles of
the Generals, all order came to an end; and things
came to such a pitch that even the auxiliaries insulted
Trebellius, drove him out of their camp, and rallied
round Coelius, horse and foot; whereupon Tre-
bellius, finding himself deserted, fled to Vitellius.
The Province, in spite of the removal of the Governor,³
remained quiet, under the two legionary Legates: they
were equal in point of authority, but Coelius, being
the bolder spirit, took the lead.

Valens and
Caecina
appointed
to lead
each an
army into
Italy: the

The accession of the British force having supplied 61
Vitellius with a powerful and well-equipped army,
he appointed two Generals, each with his own line of
march, for the war.⁴ Fabius Valens was to win over,

all the country between the Alps and the Danube as far as the river Inn. It possessed no legionary troops, so that its accession was of no great value to the cause, except as securing access to the Eastern passes over the Alps. It appears however from inscriptions that some Raetian auxiliaries were attached to the headquarters of the Upper German army at Vindonissa.

¹ Trebellius had been *cos. suf.*, possibly in A.D. 56. He is mentioned as having conducted the census of Gaul in the year A.D. 61 along with two colleagues, both of whom held him in contempt (Ann. xiv. 46).

² In what way the legions might be impoverished and despoiled is not very

clear. They may have been stinted in the matter of plunder; or Trebellius may have forbidden modes of illicit gain, such as we hear of in Ann. xiii. 35 and 51.

³ It was not long before Vitellius sent out a successor to Trebellius in the person of Vettius Bolanus (ii. 65).

⁴ Tac. does not distinctly tell us how many men were furnished by the British army, nor how they were distributed. In chap. 70 we find that Caecina, on approaching Italy, sent on ahead 'Gallic, Lusitanian, and British cohorts.' Vitellius, on setting out upon his march through Gaul to Italy, attached to himself 8000 picked men from the British army (ii. 57); and

or in case of refusal to devastate, the Gallic Provinces and burst into Italy by the Cottian Alps; Caecina was to take the shorter passage and descend into Italy by the Pennines.¹ To Valens were assigned picked troops from the Lower Army, together with the eagle² of the 5th Legion, and its auxiliary horse and foot, making up in all a force of 40,000 men; Caecina had under him 30,000 men from the Upper Army, his chief strength being furnished by the 21st Legion. To each was added a body of German auxiliaries,

former
over the
Cottian,
the latter
over the
Pennine
Alps.

when Caecina set out from Rome to resist the approach of Vespasian, he took with him the *vexilla* (detachments) of the three British legions (the 2nd, the 9th, and the 20th). We may perhaps infer that the total number did not exceed 8000, as in the case of the Moesian army the detachment from each legion amounted to no more than 2000.

¹ The famous passes here mentioned are still among the most frequented road-passes over the Alps. The Cottian Alps, called after Cottius, an Alpine chieftain in the time of Augustus, are a continuation to the northward of the Maritime Alps, and form the main barrier between the upper waters of the Po and the lower waters of the Rhone in Southern France. The course to be taken by Valens would take him down the Rhone valley as far as the mouth of the Drôme. Pursuing that valley for some distance, he would cross over to the upper waters of the Druentia (*Durance*), past the town of Brigantium (*Briançon*), and so on to the pass at their head, now known as *Mont Genève*, at a height of 6080 feet above the sea. From that pass the road would take him down the valley of the Dora Riparia, reaching the Po not far below the modern town of Turin. The whole march from Lower Germany to the point where Valens met Caecina near Cremona would not be less than from 750 to 800 miles.

The pass over the Pennine Alps, called by the Romans *Poeninae* (from a supposed derivation from *Poenus*, 'Carthaginian,' in allusion to Hannibal's passage of the Alps) is now known as the Great St. Bernard. It is approached through Switzerland up the valley of the higher Rhone, and pierces

the main chain of the Alps at a height of 8131 feet above sea level. Thence the way lies down the valley of the Dora Baltea, arriving on the Po some 25 or 30 miles below the point at which Valens would reach it. This was the pass crossed by Caecina. He had the higher and more difficult pass to cross, but his whole march from his headquarters at Vindonissa, at the junction of the Reuss and Aare rivers in Switzerland, to Placentia, was not more than about 250 miles.

² As the eagle was the standard of the legion as a whole, its presence with Valens implies that he had the whole legion with him. The phrase which follows, *cum cohortibus aliisque*, is the regular term to denote the auxiliary force, of horse and foot, which was attached to each legion. Thus Valens and Caecina had each one complete legion with its complement of auxiliaries, as the nucleus of their force; Valens the 5th from Vetera, Caecina the 21st from Vindonissa (*Windisch*) in Switzerland, the head-quarters of the upper army. In addition, each general had detachments (*vexilla*) from the other legions under their command—Valens from the 15th, 16th, and 1st, Caecina from the 4th and 22nd, each, of course, having its proportion of auxiliaries. In addition, each army seems to have contained bodies of irregular troops, some of them hastily levied for the occasion (see ii. 69), and not attached to any particular legion. The army of Valens was 40,000 strong; that of Caecina 30,000; the difference is probably due to the fact that Valens had four legions in all to draw from—picking up the 1st (*Italica*) at Lyons on his way—while Caecina had only three.

from whom Vitellius also, who was to follow with the main battle strength,¹ filled up his own army.

Contrast between the drunken torpor of Vitellius and the ardour of his troops.

Strange was the contrast between the army and 62 its General. The soldiers were all eagerness, clamouring for battle, *while Gaul was still wavering, and Spain irresolute: winter must not stop them; no craven talk of peace must stop them; on to Italy! on to Rome!* was their cry; *in civil conflicts, when not deliberation, but deeds, were wanted, there was no safety but in speed.*

The torpid Vitellius, drunk by mid-day and heavy with food, was enjoying a foretaste of his Imperial fortunes in luxurious ease and sumptuous banqueting. His place as General was supplied by the ardour and energy of the men, just as if their Emperor himself were present to encourage the active or threaten the indolent. Drawn up and alert, they clamoured for the starting-signal. The title of Germanicus was at once conferred upon Vitellius; that of Caesar² he declined even after he became victorious.

Valens encounters a happy omen on his first day's march.

A happy omen encountered Fabius Valens and his army on the first day's march. An eagle flew slowly along in front of the advancing column, as if to point out the way;³ and for such a distance did the bird pursue its flight, undisturbed and undismayed by

¹ The fine phrase *tota mole belli securus* is difficult. It seems exaggerated; but it scarcely deserves the epithets 'very vague and worthless' bestowed on it by Henderson (p. 36). The words do not necessarily refer to numbers; they may be a mode of saying that Vitellius, following with the headquarters, completed the whole battle force available. The word *mole* would include the more heavy part of the baggage, especially the siege train, which would naturally be brought on by the slower army which followed in the rear.

² Though all trace of the Julian stock had disappeared with Nero, Galba had

at once assumed the name of Caesar—an example followed by every succeeding Emperor, Vitellius alone excepted.

³ The eagle being the distinguishing standard of the Roman legion, such an omen would be specially favourable. So in Ann. ii. 17 the appearance of eight eagles is called *pulcherrimum augurium*. Though maintaining a semi-sceptical attitude, Tac. does not disdain to mention occurrences like this. See the miraculous story related in connexion with the death of Otho in ii. 50; the various prodigies gravely recounted in chap. 86; and the miracles related of Vespasian in iv. 81.

the acclamations of the soldiers, that all hailed it as a certain augury of some great success.

63 The army entered the country of the friendly Treveri, in all security; but when they came to Divodurum,¹ a city of the Mediomatrici, though received with perfect friendliness, they were seized by a sudden panic, and hastily taking up their arms, proceeded to slaughter the unoffending citizens; not from any lust of spoil or plunder, but in a fit of mad frenzy—a frenzy without cause and therefore more difficult to cure. At last, they so far yielded to the entreaties of the General as to refrain from the destruction of the city—but not until four thousand persons had been slaughtered. And such was the terror spread throughout Gaul, that whenever the army approached a town, the whole of the inhabitants, with their magistrates, would come forth as suppliants to meet them, while the women and the children cast themselves down upon the ground, holding out² every appeal that might soften an enemy's wrath, praying for peace in what was not a time of war.

64 The news of the murder of Galba and the accession of Otho reached Fabius Valens in the country of the Leuci;³ the soldiers, bent on war, were neither pleased nor alarmed by the intelligence. The Gauls hesitated no longer. They hated Otho and Vitellius alike; but they feared Vitellius as well as hating him.⁴

Shameful
behaviour
of the
legions at
Divodu-
rum.

¹ The modern Metz, on the Moselle, the next town of importance on that river above Trèves. Valens had to march up the Moselle, whence he would cross to the upper waters of the Arar (Saône), down which river he would march to Lyons. See map.

² There is a play of words here in the use of *tendebantur*, which, though going primarily with *placamenta*, conveys also the idea of the women and children holding out their arms in supplication. There is also a some-

what forced point in the antithesis between *in bello* and *pro pace*: a favourable antithesis with Tac. See chap. 54, 15, *faciliore inter malos consensu ad bellum quam in pace ad concordiam*: so again in ii. 12.

³ The Leuci occupied the upper valley of the Moselle. Their principal town was Tullum (Toul). Next to them to the S. came the Lingones, on the upper waters of the Saône.

⁴ Up to this time the Gallic tribes, as we have seen, had been divided in

Unruly
conduct
of the
Batavian
cohorts.

The neighbouring tribe of Lingones was friendly to the cause, and the troops repaid their kindly reception by excellent behaviour. This happy beginning, however, was cut short by the unruly conduct of the Batavian cohorts,¹ which, as I have already mentioned, had separated from the 14th Legion, and had been attached by Fabius Valens to his own army. A quarrel between the Batavians and the legionaries ended in blows; and as the men took sides with one party or the other, something like a pitched battle would have followed, had not Valens, by a few punishments, recalled the Batavians to a sense of discipline.

Friendli-
ness of the
Aedui,

A vain attempt was made to find a pretext for war against the Aedui² by demanding of them arms and horses: they not only provided what was asked of them, but furnished free supplies into the bargain.

and of the
Lyonnese.

What the Aedui did under terror, was done of good will by the people of Lyons.³ The 18th Cohort⁴ was suffered to remain there, in its usual winter quarters; but the Italian Legion and the Taurian Horse were

opinion. Those who had followed Vindex remained till now loyal to Galba, receiving the title of 'Galbians' for their pains (chap. 51). Galba's death left these Gauls without a leader or a cause, and they rallied to Vitellius. But the mutual rancours of the different communities still survived, as we shall see in the case of Lyons and Vienne; and Gallic discord afforded at once a powerful stimulus and a serious hindrance to the projects of Civilis later on.

¹ *I.e.* the eight Batavian cohorts (see chap. 59).

² S. of the Lingones came the Sequani, on the left bank of the Saône, whose territory extended nearly to the Rhine; on the right bank of the Saône was the powerful tribe of the Aedui, whose chief town was the famous Bibracte or Augustodunum (*Autun*). The Aedui, in the main, had been friendly to Rome; but in A.D. 21, overwhelmed with debt, they had risen in

revolt under Julius Sacrovir and had been summarily repressed by C. Silius (Ann. iii. 43-46).

³ The city of Lugdunum (*Lyons*) was specially attached to Nero out of gratitude for a gift of four million sesterces which he had made to the city in A.D. 65 to repair the ravages of a conflagration.

⁴ This cohort seems to have been one of the extra cohorts added to the *Cohortes Urbanae* which were numbered consecutively with the other city cohorts. The nine Praetorian Cohorts were numbered from i. to ix.; the Urban Cohorts, of which there were seven since the time of Claudius, were numbered from x. to xvi. We find one numbered xvii. at Ostia (chap. 80); and the cohort here named xviii. must have belonged to the same enumeration. It is probably the same as that mentioned in Ann. iii. 41 as being stationed at Lyons.

taken on. The Legate of the Italian Legion, Manlius Valens, though he had deserved well of the party, was out of favour with Vitellius; the reason being that he had been secretly traduced by Fabius, while Fabius, to put Manlius off his guard, had spoken well of him before his face.

65 The recent war against Vindex had rekindled the old feud between the cities of Lyons and Vienne—a feud which had been fought out with much mutual slaughter, and with greater fury and persistence than if the contest had only been for Nero or for Galba.¹ To vent his wrath against the Lyonnese, Galba had appropriated their revenues for the Imperial treasury, while he had conferred many distinctions on the people of Vienne. Hence rivalry and jealousy between the two towns, their hatred finding a free passage over the river which alone divided them.² The people of Lyons, therefore, appealing to the soldiers singly, urged them to destroy Vienne, telling them how the Viennese had besieged their city; how they had aided the rising of Vindex, and had recently raised Legions in support of Galba. Having thus alleged reasons for their hostility, they pointed to the splendid plunder to be gained, and not content with

Ancient
feud be-
tween
Lyons and
Vienne.

¹ This chap. gives a good example of the furious rivalries that might exist between the different Gallic communities. The important town of Lugdunum (*Lyons*), situated at the confluence of the Rhone and the Saône, was a colony possessed of the full Roman franchise. Founded in B.C. 43, it was the capital of the province Lugdunensis; it was here that the *ara Augusti* was set up, dedicated to Augustus by all the Gallic states. Vienne, on the opposite or left bank of the Rhone some 20 miles below Lyons, had originally been the chief town of the Allobroges. It was now the seat of the government of the province Narbonensis; and up to the time of Caligula,

who seems to have conferred upon it the full franchise, it had enjoyed only Latin rights.

² The Latin here presents a strained antithesis which is practically untranslatable. There arose between the two cities 'a hatred which was joined, or bound together, by the river, which alone divided them,' *i.e.* 'they were separated by a river; but that river afforded free passage, presented no hindrance, to their animosity.' It affords a curious commentary upon this passage that our own words, 'rival' and 'rivalry,' derived from the Latin *rivus*, bear witness to the traditional jealousy existing between communities settled on the banks (especially the opposite banks) of the same river.

private instigation, they passed on to public entreaties, imploring the army to avenge their wrongs and to wipe out the seat of Gallic disaffection:—

Vienna, they urged, was a foreign and hostile city; their own city was a Roman Colony,¹ a part of the Roman army, a sharer in its triumphs and its reverses. 'If fortune should turn against us,' they added, 'O leave us not to the mercy of our enemies!'

These words and others to the like effect raised 66 the fury of the soldiers to such a pitch that even the Legates and the party leaders² had given up all hope of quenching it, when the Viennese, alive to their danger, met the approaching army with olive-branches and fillets³ in their hands, and clasping the weapons, knees, and feet of the soldiers, diverted them from their purpose. Valens also made a present of three hundred sesterces to every soldier: then at last the antiquity and dignity of the Colony prevailed with them,⁴ and they listened with approbation when Fabius commended to their keeping the life and security of the inhabitants.

The citizens, nevertheless, were publicly disarmed, while they furnished the soldiers, publicly and privately, with supplies of every kind. The common belief

The soldiers with difficulty restrained from falling on the Viennese;

Valens probably bribed to spare them.

¹ Lugdunum had been founded as a military colony, its original colonists being full Roman citizens.

² Who were the 'party leaders' is not very clear. Probably they were persons of consequence among the inferior officers whom the legates took into their confidence.

³ The words *velamenta* and *infulae* mean much the same thing—'veils and fillets'; but they probably refer here to the use of olive-branches, wreathed with fillets of white wool, which were borne in the hands of suppliants. So *velata infulis ramisque oleae Carthaginiensium occurrit navis* (Liv. xxx. 36, 4); and *ramos oleae ac velamenta alia supplicum porrigentes orare*, etc. (*id.*

xxiv. 30, 14).

⁴ The irony of these words is perfect; respect for the antiquity and dignity of the colony was at once quickened in the soldiers' minds by the largesse of 300 sesterces per man. *Addidit Valens trecenos singulis militibus sestertios: tum* (and not till then) *vetustas dignitasque coloniae valuit*. An exactly similar case of irony occurs in chap. 82. After the outbreak of the Praetorians at Ostia the tribunes attempted to pacify the soldiers: their speeches ended (*finis sermonis in eo ut*) with a donative of 5000 sesterces to each soldier. *Tum* (then at last) *Otho ingredi castra ausus*.

was that Valens himself had been bought over by a large sum of money. Becoming suddenly rich after a life of poverty, he could ill conceal his change of fortune: long indigence had inflamed to an immoderate degree his love of money, and his youth of penury was succeeded by a prodigal old age.

The army was then conducted by slow stages through the country of the Allobroges¹ and the Vocontii. The length of each day's march, the shifting of every halting-place, was made a matter of buying and selling, the General driving disgraceful bargains with landowners or magistrates; he even threatened to set fire to Lucus, a city of the Vocontii, until he was mollified² by a sum of money. Where no money was to be had, he was appeased by ministration to his lusts. In this fashion the army reached the Alps.³

67 Still more rapacious, still more bloodthirsty, was Caecina. His hot temper had been fired against the Helvetii,⁴ a Gallic tribe once celebrated for their deeds of arms, and still famous for the memory of them. Not having heard of the murder of Galba, this people refused to acknowledge the authority of Vitellius; and a quarrel arose out of the impatient greed of the 21st Legion, which had seized a sum of money that was being conveyed to pay the soldiers of a fort which had for a long time been

March through the country of the Allobroges and the Vocontii to the Alps.

Caecina ravages the country and city of the Helvetii.

¹ The Allobroges occupied the country enclosed like an island between the Rhone and the Isère, as far as the Lake of Geneva, which hence was called '*Insula Allobrogum*.' The Vocontii were on the left or E. bank of the Rhone: their country offered a short cut to the upper waters of the Durance by the valley of the Drôme, thus saving the long detour round by the mouth of the former river. The town of Lucus (now *Luc*) lay high up in the Drôme valley.

² With the phrase *donec pecunia mitigaretur* may be compared the French word *douceur*, for 'a tip' or 'bribe.'

³ Here again the irony is unmistakable.

⁴ The Helvetii, whose attempted migration from their country was so ruthlessly stopped by Caesar, occupied all that part of modern Switzerland which lies between the Jura on the W., the Rhone and the Lake of Geneva on the S., and the Rhine on the E. and N.

garrisoned by the Helvetii at their own expense.¹ This incensed the Helvetii; and happening to intercept a Centurion and some soldiers who were bearing a dispatch to the Pannonian Legions in the name of the German army, they detained them in custody. Eager for battle, and ready to chastise every fault on the instant, before it could be repented of, Caecina promptly broke up his camp, devastated the country, and plundered the city of the Helvetii—a place which during the long peace had assumed the dimensions of a Municipal town, and was much frequented for its amenity and its salubrious waters.² He also dispatched a message to the Raetian auxiliaries,³ bidding them take the Helvetii in the rear, while the Legions were facing them in front.

Brave enough before danger, cowards when it arrived, the Helvetii had chosen Claudius Severus⁴ as their leader when the trouble arose; but they were ignorant of war, they knew nothing of regular formations or of concerted action. To engage veteran troops was to court destruction; their walls, crumbling with age, offered no protection against a siege. On one side of them was Caecina with a

The submission of Aventicum is accepted.

¹ From this and other passages it appears that the Romans did not carry out any general disarmament in their provinces, and that there were in many parts native levies of an irregular character outside the organisation of the legions and their auxiliaries. Such troops are mentioned in the course of the raid made by Otho's fleet upon the Narbonese province (*Ligurum cohors, vetus loci auxilium*, ii. 14); and in this passage it would appear that the Helvetii who manned the fort were acting for Rome. The existence of such bodies accounts for the support given to Vindex in his revolt, and for the rapid manner in which recruits could be raised for the Roman armies. It is specially mentioned that Vitellius in his march to Italy recruited largely by the way.

² The town here mentioned, said by

Heraeus to have been called *Aquae Helveticæ*, was a few miles to the E. of Vindonissa. It was situated on the banks of the river Limmat, mid-way in its course between the lake of Zürich and the Rhine. It is still called by the name of *Baden*, and is noted for its warm springs.

³ These Raetian auxiliaries seem to have been under the orders of the army at Vindonissa, and to have constituted a connecting link between the frontier of the Rhine and the Upper Danube.

⁴ This man, although a Helvetian, evidently spoke in Latin. He was probably called *Claudius* after the Emperor Claudius, like so many chiefs of the Rhenish and Gallic provinces. So *Claudius Cossus* chap. 69; *Claudius Paulus* iv. 13; *Claudius Labeo* iv. 18; *Claudius Victor* iv. 33.

powerful army; on the other, the Raetian auxiliaries of horse and foot, with the young manhood of the Raetians themselves,¹ used to war and trained in military methods. With slaughter and devastation thus all around them, they cast away their arms, and wandering aimlessly between the two armies, wounded for the most part or dispersed, they took refuge in Mount Vocetius.² From this position they were speedily dislodged by a Thracian cohort; pursued by both Germans and Raetians, they were cut down in the forests and in their very hiding-places. Many thousands were killed; many thousands sold as slaves. The work of destruction ended, the army was in full march for the capital Aventicum³ when they were met by envoys sent to deliver up the city; their submission was accepted. Julius Alpinus, one of their chiefs, was put to death by Caecina for having stirred up the war; the rest he left to be pardoned or punished by Vitellius.⁴

69 It were hard to say whether the Helvetian envoys found Emperor or army the more implacable.⁵ The

Helvetian
embassy to
Vitellius.

¹ The *ipsorum Raetorum iuventus* here mentioned are evidently the native levies spoken of in n. to chap. 67.

² The modern *Bötzberg* on the left bank of the Rhine, on the road between Basel and Zürich.

³ The modern Avenches, situated near the Lake of Morat, between Neuchâtel and Freiburg. Vespasian converted it into a colony, with the grand title of *Colonia Pia Flavia Constans Emerita Helvetiorum*. As this place is more than a hundred miles distant from *Aquae Helveticae*, this expedition of Caecina must have caused some delay.

⁴ Tac. gives us little or no indication of the line of march taken by Vitellius and his army; he seems to have followed very slowly along the line pursued before him by Valens. We hear in ii. 59 that he sent his army by

land, while he himself proceeded by water down the Saône; and he had got no further than Lyons when he heard the news of the battle of Bedriacum. He had probably not advanced far on his road when Caecina referred the fate of Aventicum to his decision; and though Tac. tells us in chap. 70 that Caecina only waited 'a few days' in Helvetia to receive the answer, the delay caused by the message to Vitellius and back must have been considerable.

⁵ From this point (after the first half of the word *placabilem* in line 2, down to the word *incertum* in chap. 75, line 10) a whole leaf of M is wanting. It disappeared before 1452; and for this portion we have to trust to early Florentine copies made before the leaf was lost. See Fisher's n.

soldiers demanded the extermination of the people, waving their arms and brandishing their weapons in the envoys' faces; Vitellius himself did not refrain from threats. But at last their wrath was appeased by one of the envoys, Claudius Cossus, who was noted for his eloquence, and whose skill in speaking had all the greater effect that it was cleverly concealed under a show of trepidation. With the usual mutability of a mob,¹ the soldiers became as inclined to pity as they had previously been extreme in their severity; they begged earnestly, with tears in their eyes,² for a merciful decision, and so obtained pardon and security for the community.

The Silian
Horse in
Northern
Italy come
over to
Vitellius,

Halting for a few days among the Helvetii till he should ascertain the wishes of Vitellius, and preparing at the same time for his passage over the Alps, Caecina received from Italy the welcome news that the Silian Horse,³ stationed on the Po, had taken the oath of allegiance to Vitellius. This body had served under Vitellius when Proconsul in Africa;⁴ it had been moved thence by Nero to be sent on before him into Egypt,⁵ but having been recalled on account of the war with Vindex, it was now stationed in Italy. At the instance of their officers, who knew nothing of Otho, and were devoted to Vitellius, and who magnified the strength and fame of the German army, they now came over to the Vitellian cause; and by way of

¹ The reading here is uncertain, though there can be no doubt as to the meaning. The reading of the best MSS. given by F. is ungrammatical: *ut est mos vulgus mutabile subitis et tam pronum in misericordiam*. The omission of *mos* and *et* gives the translation offered in the text.

² It is strange how often we find Roman soldiers, at the most unexpected moments, bursting into tears: 'If the Roman legionary of the time could once be induced to weep, then there was

hope of mercy at his hands' (Henderson's *Civil War*, p. 64).

³ Another body of irregular Horse, called after its organiser: perhaps C. Silius, a legate of Germanicus in his German campaign (Ann. i. 31, etc.).

⁴ Vitellius had governed justly in Africa and left a good name behind him, and the troops there at a later period readily espoused his cause as against Vespasian.

⁵ See n. on i. 31.

a present to their new Emperor they handed over to him the four strongest cities in Transpadane Gaul—Mediolanum, Novaria, Eporedia, and Vercellae.¹

and put four strong cities in his hands.

This information Caecina received from themselves; and as Italy, at its broadest part, could not be defended by a single troop of horse, he sent on in advance the Gallic, Lusitanian, and British auxiliaries,² together with some of the German detachments and Petra's Horse. He himself tarried for a while, in doubt whether he should not turn aside to Noricum over the Raetian Alps to attack the Procurator Petronius Urbicus, who had called out his auxiliaries, broken down the bridges, and was supposed to be devoted to Otho. Fearing, however, to lose the horse and foot which had already been sent on; reflecting, at the same time, that there would be more glory in keeping hold of Italy, and that Noricum, wherever the battle might be fought, would be included among the prizes of victory, he marched over the Pennine Alps in the depth of winter with the whole of his legionary troops and his heavy military train.³

Caecina sends on an advanced guard of auxiliaries, etc., into Italy;

and hesitates whether to march through Noricum.

He crosses the Pennine Alps in mid-winter.

71 Otho, meanwhile, contrary to general expectation,

Dignified

¹ These four towns (of which the modern names are *Milan*, *Novara*, *Ivrea* and *Vercelli*) formed a kind of Quadrilateral, giving their holders the command of the NW. part of Lombardy, just as the famous Quadrilateral of the Austrians (*Mantua*, *Peschiera*, *Verona* and *Legnago*) formerly secured for Austria the command of NE. Lombardy. The city of *Ivrea* lay on the *Dora Baltea*, down which Caecina had to march after crossing the Great St. Bernard, passing the colony of *Augusta Praetoria (Aosta)* on the way.

² This is the first passage from which we learn that Spanish and British auxiliaries had joined Caecina's army. All the three advancing armies seem to have recruited by the way.

³ Mr. Henderson is here very severe on Tac. for his 'strategical blindness' in 'complacently reproducing the tale that Caecina hesitated whether to attack Noricum or Italy, and finally preferred Italy as being the more important' . . . 'Tacitus had no right to be so blind.' No doubt Caecina chose the right alternative on which the whole success of his march depended; but it does not follow that the other alternative had not been considered, and it would seem to have been talked about. As to how far Tac. deserves the severe strictures passed on him by Henderson for 'strategical blindness' in this and other matters, see Hardy, *Journal of Philology*, vol. xxxi. No. 61, pp. 123-126.

conduct of
Otho.

instead of sinking into voluptuousness and sloth, put his pleasures on one side, affected to abjure debauchery, and ordered everything in a manner befitting the imperial dignity;¹ but this only deepened men's terror of virtues that were feigned and vices that were certain to return.

He pardons
Marius Celsus,
and admits
him to his
friendship.

Desiring to obtain a name for clemency by his treatment of a distinguished enemy, Otho ordered the Consul Designate, Marius Celsus—whom he had saved from the wrath of the soldiers by a pretence of imprisonment²—to be summoned to the Capitol. Celsus boldly pleaded guilty to the charge of having remained loyal to Galba, and made a merit of having set such an example. Otho made no show of pardoning him; but calling upon the Gods to bear witness to their reconciliation,³ admitted Celsus at once to his intimate friendship, and appointed him soon afterwards as one of his Generals for the war. With a like fatality⁴ of ill-fortune, Celsus remained no less true to Otho than to Galba. All ranks, high and low, rejoiced that he had been spared; even the

¹ This account of Otho's conduct in Rome is not borne out by Dio (lxiv. 8), nor by his general reputation. Tac. is perhaps thinking more of the manly way in which Otho set out for the war than of his personal behaviour in other matters (*nec illi segne aut corruptum luxu iter* ii. 11). In chap. 77 of this book Tac. withdraws part of the commendation here given.

² See above, chap. 45.

³ The reading is very doubtful. The best MS. reading is *ne hostes metueret conciliationis adhibens*, from which a good sense may fairly be extracted. If we take *conciliationis* as a kind of partitive genitive after *adhibens*, the literal translation would be 'resorting to conciliation that he might not be afraid of enemies,' or 'that he might not have enemies to be afraid of.'

This would give a strong meaning, explaining the policy on which Otho acted. It turned out to be an unfortu-

nate policy, for one of the weak points in Otho's management of his campaign was that he had no confidence in the generals whom he appointed. The conj. of Nipperdey, adopted by Heraeus and by F. (*deos testis mutuae reconciliationis adhibens*) has been followed in the translation given above.

⁴ The word *fataliter* here used, especially as coupled with *infelix*, would naturally suggest a tragic result for Celsus himself. But as Celsus survived the reign of Vitellius, and lived to be consul many years afterwards, it is evident that the meaning is only that the loyalty of Celsus was destined to bring no more good fortune to Otho than it had done to Galba. The word *fataliter* occurs only once again in Tac., in chap. 50 above, where Otho and Vitellius are spoken of as *velut ad perdendum imperium fataliter electos*.

soldiers were not displeased, admiring the very qualities which had enraged them.

72 Like joy was occasioned by a very different cause—the granting of the death of Ofonius Tigellinus. Of obscure parentage, debauched in boyhood, and profligate in old age, this man had been promoted to the Prefectures of the Watch and of the Praetorian Guard,¹ attaining the awards of virtue by the speedier avenue of vice. Cultivating after that the robuster qualities of cruelty and avarice, he corrupted Nero into committing atrocities of every kind, venturing on some himself, unknown to Nero, and becoming at last his deserter and betrayer. Hence no death was more clamorously demanded, and for opposite reasons; by some because they hated Nero, by others because they lamented him. Under Galba, he had been protected by the influence of Titus Vinius, who alleged that his daughter² owed her life to him. And certainly he had saved the girl; not indeed out of clemency, as may be judged from the number of his victims, but as a means of escape for the future. For as all bad men mistrust the present, and are fearful of a change of fortune, they prepare for themselves private favour as a protection against public hatred; not from any regard for innocence, but to secure mutual impunity in wrongdoing.³

Case of Ofonius Tigellinus; his character and career.

The recent indignation against Titus Vinius being thus added to the long-standing hatred of Tigellinus,

He is ordered to put an end to himself.

¹ On the death of Nero's wise counsellor Burrus in A.D. 62, he appointed Tigellinus as his successor in the command of the Praetorians, *veterem impudicitiam atque infamiam in eo secutus* (Ann. xiv. 51).

² The daughter's name was Crispina (chap. 47): it is conjectured that her

husband may have been convicted of some offence, and that she was spared.

³ An exact counterpart of 'Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations' (St. Luke xvi. 9).

the people, with redoubled fury, flocked from the entire city to the Palace and the Forum, and filled the Circus and the theatres, where popular license is most permitted, with disorderly cries. Tigellinus was taking the waters at Sinuessa¹ when amid the kisses and embraces of his mistresses he was informed that his last hour had come. After an unseemly delay, he cut his throat with a razor, thus adding to the infamies of his life by a tardy and inglorious death.

Demand
for the
death of
Crispinilla
resisted.

About the same time a demand was made for the death of Calvia Crispinilla; and the Emperor gained no small discredit by yielding to the various excuses made to save her. This woman had been Nero's instructress in debauchery; she had crossed over to Africa to incite Clodius Macer² to take up arms, and had openly aimed at starving out the people of Rome. Yet she afterwards acquired high favour throughout the city by virtue of her marriage with a Consular; she lived unmolested through the reigns of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, and subsequently wielded all the influence which wealth added to childlessness³ never fails to confer, whether in good or in evil times. 73

Vain nego-
tiations

Meanwhile Otho kept writing in terms of feminine 74

¹ Sinuessa was a fashionable watering-place on the coast at the extreme S. of Latium. Its popularity may have been increased by the fact that it was in the centre of the most famous vineyards of ancient Italy.

² For Clodius Macer see chap. 7. Legate of the army in Africa (*i.e.* of the 3rd Legion), he revolted from Nero without acknowledging Galba; after Galba's recognition by the Senate he had affected to restore the Republic, and given the name *Liberatrix* to his legion. As Rome depended largely upon Africa for her supplies of corn,

the ambitious lady here mentioned seems to have encouraged Macer in the idea of reducing Rome by starvation. Similarly in iii. 48 Tac. tells us that part of Vespasian's plan of campaign, after occupying Alexandria, was to invade Africa also, and thereby starve Rome into submission, *clausis annonae subsidiis inopiam ac discordiam hosti factururus.*

³ The Roman satirists continually harp upon the advantages enjoyed by the childless rich; see Hor. Sat. ii. 5, 28 foll.; also Juv. iii. 129 with Mayor's note.

flattery to Vitellius, offering him money and friendship, and whatever retreat he might select for a life of luxurious ease. Vitellius made offers of a similar kind. Each began gently, in a tone of senseless and unseemly hypocrisy; but soon they came as it were to blows, each hurling against the other, with equal truth, charges of adulteries and other shameful doings.

between
Otho and
Vitellius.

Otho now recalled the envoys sent by Galba,¹ and dispatched other envoys in the name of the Senate to the two German armies, to the Italian Legion, and to the troops quartered at Lyons. The envoys remained with Vitellius—too readily for it to be supposed that they were kept against their will; but the Praetorian soldiers, whom Otho had sent with them under pretence of a guard of honour, were sent back before they could mingle with the Legions. Besides this, Fabius Valens sent a letter to the Praetorian and Urban Cohorts in the name of the German army, writing in high-flown terms of the strength of their party, and offering them friendship; he even went the length of upbraiding them for transferring to Otho the Empire which had so long before been conferred upon Vitellius.²

Envoys
sent to the
German
armies;

75 Though plied thus alike with promises and with threats, and told that though no match for the Vitellians in war, they would lose nothing by peace, the Praetorians remained staunch. Otho sent intriguing agents into Germany, Vitellius to Rome; but to no purpose in either case. The Vitellian envoys came to no harm, passing unnoticed among a crowd in which no one knew his neighbour;

intriguing
agents
vainly em-
ployed on
both sides.

¹ As recorded in chap. 19.

² Vitellius was proclaimed Emperor by the army of Lower Germany on

Jan. 2nd, by the upper army on Jan. 3rd: Otho was proclaimed by the Praetorians on Jan. 15th.

whereas Otho's emissaries, in a place where every one was known to everybody, were betrayed by their strange faces.

Vitellius wrote to Otho's brother Titianus,¹ threatening him and his son with death if any harm should come to his own mother or his children. Both families were left unmolested. On Otho's part the clemency may have been due to fear; but as Vitellius proved the victor, he alone gained the credit.

Distribu-
tion of the
various
armies and
provinces
between
the two
parties.

The first encouraging news to reach Otho was 76
from Illyricum, that the Legions of Dalmatia, Pan-
nonia, and Moesia had sworn allegiance to him. Similar tidings came from Spain, and Otho com-
mended Cluvius Rufus in an edict; but only to learn
immediately afterwards that that country had gone
over to Vitellius. Even Aquitania² soon afterwards
did the same, in spite of having taken the oath of
allegiance to Otho under Julius Cordus. Love and
loyalty were gone; men's fears or necessities turned
them to this side or to that. It was fear that brought
over Narbonese Gaul to Vitellius: it was the easy
thing to go over to the nearer and the stronger army.
The distant Provinces, and the armies beyond the
seas, remained with Otho; not from attachment to his
cause, but because the name of the city and the
prestige of the Senate counted for much; their minds
also had been taken up by the name first presented
to them.

The Judæan army under Vespasian, the Syrian

¹ This was Otho's elder brother, his full name being L. Salvius Otho Titianus. He had been cos. under Nero in A.D. 52, and Proconsul of Asia in A.D. 63-64. In that capacity, Agricola was his quaestor, and Tac. in the Agric. (chap. 7) gives him a bad character for avarice. He shared the consulship with his brother in this year (chap. 77).

² The province of Aquitania, as established by Augustus, included all the SW. quarter of France from the Pyrenees to the Loire, corresponding practically to the Anjou kingdom which was attached to the English crown for some three hundred years. The name has acquired fresh fame as that of the largest British ship now afloat.

under Mucianus,¹ swore allegiance to Otho; Egypt also and all the Eastern Provinces were held in his name. Africa showed a like obedience, the city of Carthage leading the way; where, without waiting for the authority of Vipstanus Apronianus the Proconsul, a freedman of Nero's called Crescens (for in evil times even such persons pretend to be somebodies in the state²) had given a banquet to the populace in honour of the new reign. The people hurried on various extravagant demonstrations, and the example set by Carthage was followed by the other cities.

77 The armies and Provinces being thus drawn to different sides, war was necessary for Vitellius if he was to seize his chance of Empire, while Otho was discharging its duties as in a time of profound peace.³ Some things he did with due regard to the public dignity, many more with unseemly haste to meet the needs of the moment.⁴ The Consulship he himself assumed with his brother Titianus as colleague, up to the 1st of March.⁵ The succeeding months, by way of a sop to the German Army, he assigned to Verginius,

Allotment
of offices
and
honours
by Otho.

¹ For the legions constituting these armies, see n. on ii. 4, 16.

² Tac. cannot repress his indignation at such persons as freedmen having the impudence to take part in political affairs. So with the mission of the freedman Polyclitus to Britain in A.D. 61 (Ann. xiv. 39).

³ This placed Otho at a disadvantage. He had to conduct the general business of the Empire, he had to manage Rome, where things were in a very critical state, as well as to make his preparations for war. But it must be noted also that the delay which proved fatal to Otho was not due to his own movements, but to the slow advance of the Moesian legions.

⁴ As to Otho's general conduct at this time, see n. on chap. 71, 3.

⁵ Under ordinary circumstances a new Emperor assumed the consulship for a period of four months (that period being called a *nundinum* or *nundinium*)

on the 1st of Jan. after his accession; and it was usual for the other two *nundina*, of four months each, to be held by different persons. In this year of revolution, all was upset. Galba and Vinus had entered on the consulship on the 1st of Jan.; Otho assumed it along with his brother on the 26th, but only held it until the 1st of March, giving way to Verginius and Vopiscus for the last two months of his term. After that, Otho carried out the dispositions made by Nero and Galba respectively. The two Sabini had been named by Nero for the period May 1 to August 31; Antoninus and Celsus by Galba for the period from Sept. 1 to Dec. 31. Vitellius, on becoming Emperor, permitted these last arrangements to stand, but cut short the period of office to two months instead of four, so as to enable him to confer immediate consulships on his two successful generals, Caecina and Valens (ii. 71).

with whom he associated Pompeius Vopiscus,¹ on the pretext of their old friendship; but most people took it as a compliment to the Viennese. The remaining Consulships were left with the nominees of Nero or of Galba, the two Sabini, Caelius² and Flavius, succeeding up to the 1st of July, Arrius Antoninus³ and Marius Celsus up to the 1st of September—appointments which Vitellius himself after his victory left undisturbed. As to the priesthoods and augurships, Otho either conferred them as a crowning distinction on old men who had already held high office, or else consoled youthful nobles recently returned from exile by bestowing on them the sacred offices which had been held by their ancestors and their fathers. Cadius Rufus,⁴ Pedius Blaesus, and Saevinus were restored to senatorial rank. These men had been convicted of extortion under Claudius and Nero; but in pardoning them now, the offence which had been one of avarice was converted into one of *maiestas*—a name so odious that it sufficed to make even the best of laws inoperative.⁵

Otho sought to secure the good will of cities and 78

Various
favours

¹ He was, perhaps, a native of Vienne.

² Caelius Sabinus was a jurist of some distinction; the Flavius Sabinus here mentioned (and again in ii. 36 and 51) is not to be confounded with Vespasian's brother of that name, who played later so important and tragic a part as *praefectus urbi* during the last days of Vitellius (iii. 64, foll.).

³ This name is interesting, as the bearer was grandfather on the mother's side of the Emperor Antoninus Pius.

⁴ Rufus had been condemned for extortion in Bithynia in A.D. 49 (Ann. xii. 22); Blaesus for the same offence in Crete and Cyrene in A.D. 59 (Ann. xiv. 18).

⁵ *I.e.* the very name *maiestas* (treason) was so odious from the memory of the accusations conducted in its name

in previous reigns that if any convicted criminal could claim that he had been charged with *maiestas* he would be pardoned for the crimes he had actually committed. *Bonae leges* are laws punishing crimes, and therefore 'good' for the protection of society. We are not so very superior to the Romans in this matter. We have seen the grossest crimes against society palliated if they could be called 'political,' or if the punishment of them could be stigmatised as 'coercion.' For the law of *maiestas*, and the gradual development of its meaning, see Ann. i. 73 and 74; xiv. 48 and 60, and nn. The meaning of *perire* is peculiar in the sense of disappearing, *i.e.* 'ceased to be enforced,' 'became of no effect.' Cp. *perente obsequio etiam imperium intercedit* (i. 83).

of Provinces by similar favours. He admitted new families to the Colonies of Hispalis¹ and Emerita; he conferred the Roman citizenship on the entire people of the Lingones;² he handed over to the Province of Baetica certain cities of Mauretania; and he granted fresh rights to Cappadocia³ and to Africa—rather for show than with any likelihood of permanence. Such measures might be excused by the necessities and anxieties of the moment; yet even at such a time Otho could not forget his former loves, causing the Senate to pass a decree to replace the statues of Poppaea.⁴ People even believed that he thought of honouring the memory of Nero, in the hope of pleasing the multitude. Some persons set up statues of that Emperor; and there were even occasions when the soldiers and the populace greeted Otho by the appellation of ‘Nero Otho,’ as though devising for him a new distinction. Otho himself made no response—afraid to refuse the designation, or ashamed to accept it.

granted in
the pro-
vinces.

79 All thoughts being now turned to the Civil War, no attention was paid to foreign affairs. This emboldened the Rhoxolani,⁵ a Sarmatian tribe, who had destroyed two of our cohorts in the preceding winter, to make an incursion into Moesia with a force of 9000 horse. Flushed with success, and bent more on

Incursion
of the
Rhoxolani
into
Moesia;

¹ The modern *Seville*, in the province of Baetica; Emerita Augusta in Lusitania is now *Merida*. The arrival of fresh colonists was welcomed because it added to the strength and security of the colony; the assignations of land to the new colonists would not necessarily interfere with the holdings of the existing colonists. They would usually be taken either from the *ager publicus* of the community, or from the natives of the country.

² The reading *Lingonibus* is thought doubtful, because all the other favours

granted in this sentence refer to Spain.

³ Cappadocia had been made into a province by Tiberius.

⁴ The statues of Poppaea had been overturned by the mob in A.D. 62 in indignation at the death of Octavia; but they had been restored, and were probably thrown down again after the death of Nero. For the story of Poppaea and her relations with Otho see Ann. xiii. 46 and n.; and also above, chap. 13 n.

⁵ The position of this people, north of the Danube, is not definitely known.

booty than on battle, they heedlessly dispersed their forces, and were suddenly attacked by the 3rd Legion and its auxiliaries. The Romans were all ready for battle; the Sarmatians were scattered in their thirst for plunder, or weighed down with spoil; and as the slippery ground took all the speed out of their horses, they were cut down as if bound in chains.

they are severely defeated by the 3rd legion under Aponius.

For, strange to say, all the valour of the Sarmatians lies as it were outside themselves: no troops are so feeble on foot, but the charges of their cavalry are irresistible. Upon this occasion, the day was wet, the frost had given way, and what with the slipping of their horses, and the weight of their coats of mail, the riders could make no use of their spears and their enormous two-handed swords. These coats are worn as a protection by all their chiefs and nobles. Being constructed of iron plates, or tough hides knit together, they are impenetrable to blows: but once attacked and overthrown, the wearers are unable to rise. The men sank also in the deep soft snow, while the Roman soldiers, clad in their pliant¹ cuirasses, leapt on them with javelins and lances, or it might be with their light swords, which they plunged at close quarters into the defenceless bodies of the Sarmatians, who have no shields to protect them. The few who survived the battle concealed themselves in the marshes, where they perished of their wounds or through the inclemency of the season.

Triumphal statue voted to Aponius.

When this was known in Rome, a triumphal statue² was voted to Marcus Aponius the Governor

¹ The word *facilis* here means 'uncumbersome' or 'pliable'; not binding the movements of the body.

² A triumphal statue was crowned with laurel, and clothed in the *toga*

picta and the *tunica palmata*. From the time when Agrippa twice refused a triumph (in the years B.C. 19 and 14), no actual triumph was celebrated except by an Emperor, or by a member

of Moesia,¹ while consular ornaments² were awarded to the legionary Legates, Fulvus Aurelius, Julianus Tettius, and Numisius Lupus.³ For Otho was highly pleased, taking to himself the credit of the victory as though it were his own, and as though by his own Generals and his own armies he had added to the glory of the Empire.

80 Meanwhile, out of a small beginning which gave no cause for alarm, there arose a sudden outbreak which well-nigh brought about the destruction of the city. Otho had ordered up the 17th Cohort⁴ from Ostia to Rome, and had directed Varius Crispinus, one of the Praetorian Tribunes, to see to the arming of it. Thinking that he would be more free for executing this command when the camp was quiet, Crispinus ordered the armoury to be opened and the waggons of the cohort loaded at night-fall. The hour aroused suspicion; the motive was challenged; the studied arrangements for secrecy provoked an uproar, and the sight of arms created in drunken heads a desire to make use of them. A cry of treachery was raised

Insenate military outbreak; the soldiers rush to the Palace to save Otho,

of the imperial family, as by Germanicus in A.D. 17 (Ann. ii. 41).

¹ As Governor of Moesia, and commander of the Moesian army, M. Aponius Saturninus occupied a very important position in regard to the Civil War, and might have exercised a decisive influence on its course. But he seems to have been a man of no character. Had he hurried on his army, he would have been in time to join Otho on the Po before the battle of Bedriacum, and possibly to prevent the junction of Valens and Caecina in the plains of Lombardy. Otho's whole chances depended upon the arrival in good time of the Moesian army. In ii. 96 we find Aponius wavering for a time between Vitellius and Vespasian; in ii. 85 he attempts the murder of a legionary legate from reasons of private enmity; and in iii. 11 he is with difficulty rescued from an outbreak of his own

troops. The incursion of the Rhoxolani was probably one of the causes of his delay.

² The special *ornamenta* of the consulship were the *toga praetexta* and the *sella curulis*; but the phrase *ornamenta consularia* or *praetoria* is used to denote a titular consulship or praetorship, which, without conveying any power, entitled the person so distinguished to wear the dress, and receive the other social privileges, of the honorary rank so conferred.

³ These were the legates of the three Moesian legions: viz. the 3rd (*Gallica*), the 7th (*Claudia*) and the 8th (*Augusta*). The 3rd had formed part of the Syrian army under Mucianus (we are told in ii. 74 that Vespasian considered this legion 'his own'); but it had been brought over by Nero to strengthen the Moesian army.

⁴ See n. on chap. 64.

against the Tribunes and Centurions :—*The Senators were arming their slaves to compass the destruction of Otho.* Some of the men, heavy with wine, did not know what they were doing ; the evil-minded had an eye to plunder ; the common herd, as usual, was eager for any disturbance ; while the obedience of the better sort was of no avail in the darkness. A Tribune who tried to stop the riot was cut down, together with some of the strictest Centurions : the rioters seized their arms, and throwing themselves into the saddle,¹ sword in hand, made for the city and the Palace.

who is entertaining a company at a banquet.

Otho was at that moment entertaining at a grand 81 banquet the leading men and ladies of the city. The terrified guests, not knowing whether this was an accidental military outbreak, or a plot of Otho's ; wondering whether it were more dangerous to remain and be caught, or to disperse and fly ; at one moment affecting fortitude, at another betraying their alarm, kept their eyes fixed on Otho : and Otho, as happens when suspicion is abroad, caused no less terror than he felt. Alarmed for the Senate's safety as much as for his own, he had instantly dispatched the Praetorian Prefects to calm the fury of the soldiers, and he ordered his guests to depart without delay. Thereupon might be seen on every side magistrates throwing away their insignia of office, and shunning the company of their own slaves and attendants ; aged men and women in the darkness making for remote streets, some few for their homes, a greater number for the houses of friends, others looking for some chance hiding-place with the humblest of their dependents.

Confusion among Otho's guests ;

Not even the Palace doors could stop the in-rush 82

¹ Attached to each Praetorian Cohort was a small body of horse.

of the soldiers. They burst into the banqueting-hall, demanding to have Otho shown to them; they wounded Julius Martialis, a Tribune, and Vitellius Saturninus, Prefect of a Legion,¹ who attempted to bar their entrance. In a frenzy of blind passion, they pointed their arms all round, threatening now the Centurions and the Tribunes, now the Senate as a whole, and being unable to denounce any single victim, they demanded vengeance against all.

At length Otho, regardless of his imperial dignity, took his stand upon a couch, and with difficulty prevailed on them, by entreaties and by tears, to return reluctant, but not guiltless, to the camp. Next day houses were shut as in a captured city; few citizens were to be seen in the streets; the populace were as if in mourning, while the soldiers cast their eyes upon the ground, with scowls rather than penitence on their faces. The Prefects Licinius Proculus and Plotius Firmus² harangued the soldiers in their maniples, the former gently, the latter with sternness, in accordance with their respective natures. The speeches ended in each man having paid down to him a sum of 5,000 sesterces.

Then at last³ Otho ventured into the camp, where he was at once surrounded by the Tribunes and Centurions, who flung away the insignia of their rank, praying for their lives and for a discharge. Stung by this reproach, the soldiers returned to their

he with
difficulty
quiets the
soldiers.
Panic in
the city.

Otho enters
the camp,

¹ This was the legion enrolled from the *classici* (i. 6), called *Prima Adiutrix*, the only complete legion now quartered in Rome. The officer mentioned as *praefectus legionis* was probably the prefect of the camp, who would command in absence of the legate.

² The joint Praetorian prefects whose

appointment under Otho is mentioned above (chap. 46).

³ A fine instance of Tacitean irony. Otho did not venture to enter the camp until the soldiers had received the bounty. See n. on a similar ironical use of *tum* in chap. 66.

obedience, and even called for the punishment of the ringleaders.

and lectures the soldiers in a studied harangue.

Amid all this confusion and diversity of feeling among the soldiers—perceiving that the better sort demanded some cure for the present license, while the common multitude liked well to be courted¹ by their commanders, and might more readily be led on to civil war through turbulence and rapine: reflecting also that a Principate gained by crime could not be maintained by a sudden return to the discipline and severity of ancient times, and being at the same time alarmed for the safety of the city and the Senate—Otho at last spoke as follows:—

‘I have not come hither, fellow-soldiers, to inflame your love for me, nor yet to stimulate your valour—both of which things you have in full measure—I have come to ask of you to put some restraint upon your bravery, some limit to your affection. The recent disturbance did not begin in cupidity or in hatred, which have so often created discord among armies; nor was it caused by any flinching from danger or by dread of it. It was excited by your exceeding affection—an affection more zealous than discreet; for if discretion be wanting, the most noble intention may issue in disaster. We are now going forth to war: will due deliberation be possible, can fleeting opportunity be seized, if all news is made public, if every plan is discussed in everybody’s presence? There are some things which a soldier ought to know; there are others of which he must remain ignorant. If Generals are to command, if discipline is to be maintained, there are many occasions on which even Tribunes and Centurions have only to obey. If

¹ This passage well illustrates the meaning of the words *ambitio* and *ambitiosus*. *Ambitio* means a striving for favour, usually by illicit or improper means; *ambitiosum imperium* is a

system of command which courts the men, and truckles for their favour. So in ii. 12, *Suedius Clemens ambitioso imperio regebat*.

every soldier may ask the reasons for an order, obedience will disappear, and all military authority will be gone. Are we, in war-time, to have arms snatched up in the dead of night? Shall one or two drunken and ill-conditioned men—for I cannot believe that the recent mad outbreak was the work of more than that number—stain their hands with the blood of Centurions and Tribunes, and burst into their General's tent?

84 *'What you did, doubtless, was done on my behalf; but in the scurry, in the darkness and general confusion, some occasion might have offered itself to my hurt. If Vitellius and his satellites were given the power to choose, what spirit, what temper, would they pray to see in us but those of faction and sedition—that soldier should not obey Centurion, nor Centurion Tribune, and that with horse and foot mixed up together, we should rush to our destruction? The essence of war, my comrades, consists in obeying the General's orders, not in questioning them; and that army will be bravest at the moment of danger that has been most orderly before it. Let yours be the arms and the courage; but leave to me the thinking, and the directing of your valour. The fault has been that of a few; two only shall be punished. Let the rest of you blot out the memory of that most shameful night!*

'And never again let any army of ours hear those cries against the Senate. To denounce the supreme Council of the Empire—the pride and glory of all the Provinces—that, by Hercules! not even those Germans whom Vitellius is at this moment calling up against us would dare to do: and shall any sons of Italy¹—shall our own Roman youth—call for the blood and slaughter of that Order whose lustre and distinction throws the beggarly and

¹ The Praetorian Cohorts and the Urban Cohorts were the only troops

which at this time were recruited entirely in Italy.

ignoble faction of Vitellius into the shade? Vitellius has secured certain tribes; he has some semblance of an army: but we have the Senate with us. Thus on our side stands the Republic; on theirs, the enemies of the Republic. What? Think you that this fair city of ours consists of houses and walls and stones piled one upon another? ¹ Dumb and lifeless things like these may perish and be restored, and it matters not: but the perpetuity of our Empire, the peace of the nations, your lives and mine, are founded on the safety of the Senate. That Senate, instituted under divine auspices by the Father and Founder of our city, has passed on, continuous and undying, from Kings to Emperors: let us hand it down to our descendants as we received it from our forefathers. For as the Senators spring from your ranks, so do the Emperors from the Senate.'

This speech pacified the soldiers, but not the city.

This speech, fitted at once to prick and to pacify 85 the soldiers' minds, together with the moderate amount of punishment—for Otho had ordered only two for execution—was gratefully received, and restored order for the moment among men who could not have been coerced. But the city did not resume her quiet: there was still a clatter of arms, still a look of war: and though the soldiers refrained from rioting as a body, they dispersed themselves in disguise through private houses, looking askance upon all whose birth or fortune or distinction of any kind exposed them to be evil spoken of. Many also believed that Vitellian soldiers had come into the city to discover the state of parties; hence suspicion was rampant everywhere, and men trembled even in their homes.

¹ In attributing this sentiment to Otho—so totally foreign to all we know of his life and character—Tac. must surely have had in mind the well-known

lines of Sophocles:—

ὡς οὐδὲν ἔστιν οὔτε πύργος οὔτε ναῦς,
ἔρημος ἀνδρῶν μὴ ξυνοικούντων ἔσω.

(O.T. 56-7.)

Greater still was the public alarm ; as each fresh rumour arrived, men changed their minds and their faces, not wishing to appear downcast if the news was doubtful, or too little elated if it was good. When the Senate met, it was hard to steer a middle course. Silence might be construed as contumacy, free speech might arouse suspicion ; and as Otho had so lately been a private citizen, saying the same things, he understood the language of adulation. So proposals were turned and twisted, now this way and now that ; some denouncing Vitellius as a public enemy and a parricide, the more prudent confining themselves to general abuse, others casting up against him true scandals, but amid a babel of many voices, or with a torrent of words which served to drown their meaning.¹

General alarm and uncertainty.

86 Alarm also was created by prodigies reported by divers witnesses. The reins of the chariot on which Victory stands in the area of the Capitol had dropped from her hands ; a form larger than the human had issued from the shrine of Juno ; the statue of the Divine Julius upon the Tiberine island² had turned round, on a day of perfect calm, from West to East ; an ox in Etruria had spoken ; monstrous births had taken place, together with many other marvels such as in uncivilised ages are observed even in quiet times, but which nowadays are only heard of in moments of anxiety.³

Various prodigies added to the alarm.

¹ The contemptuous irony with which Tac. describes the clamour of the wily and terrified patriots could scarcely be surpassed.

² The *Insula Tiberina*, probably a continuation of the ridge which forms the Capitol, afforded a convenient mode of crossing the river between the *Vela-brum* and the *Janiculum*. Tradition ascribed its origin to quantities of grain thrown into the river from the estates of

the Tarquins in the *Campus Martius* after their expulsion. It was also known as *Insula Aesculapii*, from the temple to that God founded shortly after B.C. 292 ; and as *Inter duos pontes*, from the bridges connecting it with either bank.

³ The quiet irony of this passage shows that we need not always accept Tacitus's record of prodigies as an indication that he believed in them.

Ominous
inundation
of the
Tiber.

But the greatest alarm of all—one in which fears for the future were joined with present disaster¹—was caused by a sudden inundation of the Tiber.² Coming down in immense volume, its waters carried away the Sublician Bridge;³ and being thrown back by the obstructing mass, flooded not only the level and low-lying parts of the city but those also which were thought to be safe from such calamities. Many persons were swept away in the streets; many more were cut off in their shops and sleeping-chambers; lack of food and earnings brought about a famine among the common people. The foundations of tenements⁴ were sapped by the standing water, and gave way when it subsided. And as soon as men's minds had been relieved from these fears, and Otho was preparing to set forth, the fact that his way to the war through the Campus Martius and by the Flaminian Way⁵ was blocked, instead of being referred to chance or to its natural causes, was interpreted as a portent, ominous of impending calamity.

Otho re-
solves to

Having purified⁶ the city, Otho pondered over his 87

¹ Plut. adds the explanation that the corn-magazines had been flooded, and much corn destroyed.

² For the inundations of the Tiber see Ann. i. 76 and 79 and nn.

³ The *Pons Sublicius* (from *sublica* 'a pile'), was the first bridge over the Tiber, made of wood; it was attributed to Ancus Marcius. Its exact position is uncertain; but it is said to have spanned the river close to the Forum Boarium, within the Servian fortifications (Platner, *Ancient Rome*, pp. 48 and 77).

⁴ An *insula*, as contrasted with a *domus* (a large self-contained mansion), was a huge block of buildings containing many separate habitations, like the 'tenements' or 'lands' in Scotch towns. See nn. on Ann. vi. 45, and xv. 41.

⁵ The *Via Flaminia* was the great military road from the city to the north, completed by C. Flaminius about B.C. 220. Crossing the Tiber by the Mulvian Bridge, two miles N.

of the city, it ascended the valley of that river as far as its confluence with the Nar. Ascending the Nar past Narnia, Carsulae (not, apparently, by Spoletium), and Fulginium, it then crossed the Apennines and came down the valley of the Metaurus to Fanum Fortunae on the Adriatic. Coasting thence to Ariminum, it there joined on to the *Via Aemilia*, made just before the Second Punic War, and ran past the towns of Bononia, Mutina, and Parma, right up to the colony of Placentia. Placentia, on the S. side of the Po, was founded in B.C. 219, at the same time as Cremona on the N. side of that river, and for the same purpose—to hold in check the Gauls of the Transpadane country. It was over these two roads that Otho and his army had now to march, and over these that the great operations of Vitellius and the Flavians were conducted later on in this eventful year.

⁶ The ceremony of *lustratio* consisted

plan of campaign; and seeing that the Pennine and Cottian Alps, and the other approaches to Gaul, were closed by the armies of Vitellius, he resolved to make an attack upon the Province of Narbonese Gaul.¹ For he had a powerful fleet, devoted to his cause, having formed into a regular Legion the survivors of the massacre at the Mulvian Bridge who had been so cruelly kept in custody by Galba; while to the remainder he held out the prospect of more honourable service in the future. To these he added the Urban Cohorts, with a considerable number of Praetorians, who were to constitute the main strength of the force, and to serve as guards and counsellors to the Generals themselves.

make a descent upon Narbonese Gaul.

The chief command he gave to Antonius Novellus and Suedius Clemens, Centurions of the first rank,² together with Aemilius Pacensis, to whom he had restored the Tribuneship of which he had been deprived by Galba.³ The freedman Moschus

Officers appointed for the expedition.

in the sacrifice of a bull, a sheep, and a pig (*suovetaurilia*), which were sacrificed after being driven or led by the Pontifex Maximus round the *pomerium*. Prayers were offered at selected places on the route.

¹ The plan of attacking the coast of Narbonese Gaul would have constituted a fine strategic move had it been carried out in time, with a sufficient force, and under competent management. A serious diversion upon the right flank of Valens while he was marching down the Rhone might have caused him to divide his forces, and prevented him from crossing the Alps before the arrival of Otho with his main army on the Po. Even as it was, Valens had to detach part of his force to encounter the raid, and this produced a mutiny among his troops, and must have been partly responsible for the slowness of his march, complained of by Caecina's army (ii. 30). All was spoilt by the incompetence of the commanders. See Bernard Hender-

son's admirable statement of the situation, *Civil War and Rebellion*, pp. 70-79.

² The centurion who was called *primus pilus* or *primipilus* was the chief of the sixty centurions in a legion, being the 1st centurion of the 1st maniple of the 1st cohort. A centurion who had once held that rank was termed *primipilaris*.

³ Otho was singularly unfortunate in his choice of generals; nor did he give them his confidence when chosen. His only good general was Suetonius Paulinus, and his advice was not listened to. Of Antonius Novellus we hear, in ii. 12, that he had *nulla auctoritas*; we do not hear of him again. Suedius Clemens had been a *primipilus*, and as *praefectus castrorum* seems to have commanded the two legions in Egypt. Aemilius Pacensis had been dismissed from a tribuneship in an Urban cohort by Galba (chap. 20), was reinstated by Otho, and now put into this important command.

was left undisturbed in charge of the fleet,¹ being set to watch the fidelity of men better than himself.

The forces of horse and foot were put under the command of Suetonius Paulinus,² Marius Celsus, and Annius Gallus;³ but the man most trusted was Licinius Proculus,⁴ Prefect of the Praetorians. This man, though vigorous in his urban command, had had no experience in war; but disparaging by turns the special excellences of the others—the experience of Paulinus, the energy of Celsus, and the ripe judgment of Gallus—he succeeded in the easy task of outstripping by unscrupulous cunning men of worth and modesty.

Dolabella
sent into
retirement.

About this time Cornelius Dolabella⁵ was ordered 88
into retirement at the Colony of Aquinum,⁶ where he was kept in easy and honourable confinement; not that any charge was brought against him, but because his ancient name and his relationship to Galba made him a marked man.⁷ Otho ordered many of the magistrates and a large proportion of the Consulars

Otho
orders out
a large

¹ Apparently this does not mean the command of the fleet, but only the superintendence of the condition of the ships, their crews, and their supplies, etc.

² C. Suetonius Paulinus was the foremost Roman general of the time. He had distinguished himself as *legatus praetorius* in Mauretania, being the first Roman General to cross Mt. Atlas. Appointed to the command of Britain in A.D. 59, he crushed the formidable rising of Boudicca in A.D. 61. He held a second consulship in the year A.D. 66; the date of his first consulship is uncertain.

³ We know nothing in detail about Annius Gallus; but Tac. says nothing in his dispraise, and he seems to have been a judicious and trusted officer. He agreed with the advice of Suetonius before the battle of Bedriacum (ii. 33); and after that battle he is said to have pacified Otho's seditious soldiers *consilio, precibus, auctoritate* (ii. 44).

⁴ This man was the evil genius of Otho. By a gross relaxation of authority Otho had permitted the Praetorians to choose their own prefects; one of the two was this Licinius Proculus, *intima familiaritate Othonis suspectus consilia eius fovisse* (i. 46). It was this man, along with Otho's brother Titianus, who urged Otho to the fatal decision of fighting at Bedriacum, contrary to the prudent advice of the generals.

⁵ Cn. Cornelius Dolabella was a connexion of some sort of Galba's, and so came under suspicion.

⁶ A city of Latium distinguished as the birthplace of Juvenal (Sat. iii. 319).

⁷ Besides his high birth, etc., Dolabella was open to suspicion (according to Plut. Galba 23) because he had been thought of as one of the candidates for adoption by Galba. One of the first acts of Vitellius was to put him to death (ii. 63, 64).

to accompany him in the field; not indeed to take a part in the war or to help in it, but to make a show as a retinue. Among these was Lucius Vitellius,¹ who was treated with the same consideration as the rest, neither as an Emperor's brother nor as an enemy.

retinue of senators.

In the city there was much anxiety. No class was free from danger or apprehension. Leading Senators, incapacitated by old age, or enervated by long peace, indolent nobles who had forgotten war, and Knights who had never known it, displayed their fears all the more openly that they laboured to conceal and hide them away. Some again senselessly sought to ingratiate themselves by purchasing fine arms and horses; while others, by way of equipment for war, provided themselves with luxurious outfits for feasting, or with means for the gratification of their lusts. Wise men bethought them of peace and of the public interests; the light-minded and the improvident were swelled with empty hopes, while many who had lost their credit² in quiet times rejoiced in a state of confusion, and sought for safety in incertitude.

General apprehension in Rome.

Various preparations for war.

89 But the multitude and the populace, whose vast numbers had no concern with high affairs of state,³ began to feel the pinch of war. No money was spent but upon the army, and the prices of provisions

The populace feel the strain of the war.

¹ The younger brother of the Emperor Vitellius. He had been *cos. suf.* in the year A.D. 48, succeeding his brother in that office on the 1st of July. He is described by Tac. as *par vitiis fratris, in principatu eius vigilantior, nec perinde prosperis socius quam adversis abstractus* (iv. 2). For his terrible wife Triaria (*ultra feminam ferox*), see ii. 63, and iii. 77.

² *I.e.* in a financial sense, 'being in financial difficulties.'

³ A difficult and doubtful passage. The words *magnitudine nimia* are not

very appropriate to the number of the people; on the other hand, the order of the words (*magnitudine nimia communium curarum expers populus*) makes it scarcely possible to connect *magnitudine* with *communium curarum*, though that would convey the very Tacitean idea that great affairs of state were 'too high for' the mass of the people. Cp. his complaint as to the general *inscitia rei publicae ut alienae* (i. 1). Her. unnecessarily inserts *imperii* after *magnitudine*.

rose, causing greater hardship to the populace than they had suffered during the revolt of Vindex. That movement had not disquieted the city; fought out in the Provinces, between the Legions and the Gallic states, it was practically a foreign war. For ever since Augustus had established the fortunes of the Caesars, the wars of the Roman people had been fought far away, bringing glory or disquietude to one man. Under Gaius and Tiberius, the Commonwealth had known only the calamities of peace; the rising of Scribonianus¹ against Claudius had been crushed as soon as heard of; Nero was driven from power more by reports and rumours than by force of arms. But now the Legions and the fleets, and even the Praetorian and Urban troops—as had seldom happened before—were led out to battle, with the East and the West, and all the forces on either side behind them: material enough, under leaders of another stamp, for a long war.

Attempt to
detain
Otho;

Some persons pressed Otho to postpone his departure for a religious reason, because the sacred shields had not been returned to their places;² but he would not hear of any delay, seeing that delay had proved fatal to Nero. The fact also that Caecina had already crossed the Alps spurred him on.

he sets out
upon the

On the 14th of March³ Otho commended the state 90

¹ For the abortive revolt of Furius Camillus Scribonianus against Claudius in Dalmatia in A.D. 42, see Ann. xii. 52, and Suet. Claud. 13.

² On the 1st of March in each year the sacred shields (*ancilia*), one of which was supposed to have fallen down from heaven, were taken out of the temple where they were kept (the *Sacrarium Martis* on the Palatine), and entrusted to the Salii, who kept them for a month, carrying them through the city in procession, and

dancing the dances from which they took the name of Salii. They would not be replaced till the end of the month. Suet. notices the ill omen (Otho 8)¹; so Liv. xxxvii. 33.

³ It is clear from what follows that Tac. meant to give this date for Otho's departure from Rome, but Suet. places it on the 24th (Otho 8). It is certain that he had arrived at Brixellum by the 3rd of April; the distance from Rome to Brixellum is not less than 300 miles; and it is scarcely credible that the army

to the care of the Fathers; and at the same time gave back to the restored exiles such of their confiscated property as had not yet found its way into the Treasury. This was a just, and on the face of it a generous, act; but in reality it was worth nothing, seeing that the money had been promptly called up long before. After that he summoned an assembly, to which he spoke in grand terms of the majesty of the city, and of the unanimity of the Senate and People in his favour. Of the Vitellian party he spoke with moderation, blaming rather the folly, than the presumption, of the Legions. Of Vitellius himself he made no mention; whether this forbearance was his own, or was the doing of Galerius Trachalus, the writer of the speech, whose brains Otho was supposed to use in civil matters, just as Suetonius Paulinus and Marius Celsus were his advisers in military affairs, and who perhaps abstained from abusing Vitellius with an eye to his own future safety. There were some who could recognise his ample and sonorous style of oratory, which was well suited to catch the popular ear, and familiar to all from his constant practice in the courts of law.¹

14th of
March,

after making a
grandiloquent
speech to
the people.

The mob, after its kind, applauded vociferously and insincerely, professing as much zeal and devotion as though they were speeding forth the Dictator²

could have made that march in ten days. Even starting on the 14th, the army must have done 15 miles a day.

¹ The contemptuous tone of Tac. towards the style of Trachalus is exactly what we should expect. His own style may be regarded as an emphatic protest against the full and florid style which Cicero had made so popular, and which became so frothy in the hands of his would-be imitators. The opposite and Stoic view of style is well illustrated by Persius, whose first Satire is full of ridicule at the 'ample

and sonorous style' here attributed to Trachalus. Quintilian describes Trachalus as having *sublimitas corporis, ardor oculorum, gestus praestantia*, while of his voice he says that it was *non, ut Cicero desiderat, paene tragœdorum, sed super omnes quos ego quidem audierim tragœdos* (xii. 5, 5). These were just the qualities to move the contempt of Tacitus.

² Julius Caesar is frequently called 'The Dictator,' to distinguish him from all other Caesars (Ann. iv. 34; vi. 16; xiii. 3). The title of 'Imperator' as a

Caesar or the Emperor Augustus. It was not fear that moved them, nor yet love; they seemed to revel in their own servility: just like slaves in a private household, where every man is prompted by his own personal interests, caring nothing for the common good.

He leaves
the city in
charge of
his brother.

Thus Otho set forth, leaving the peace of the city and the business of the Empire in the charge of his brother, Salvius Titianus.

praenomen, to denote that he was specially invested with supreme power, was conferred upon Augustus by the Senate in B.C. 29, though he would seem to have used that title as early as B.C. 40 (see Dict. Ant. i. 998a). Hence the appearance of IMP. as a *praenomen* on imperial coins. Quite different from this formal investiture was the saluta-

tion of a victorious general by his troops as 'Imperator' on the field of battle. That was a republican practice; but, as we see from the case of Vitellius (i. 57), and that of Vespasian (ii. 80), Emperors now dated their accession to power from the day of this military salutation.

BOOK II

I MEANWHILE Fortune, on the opposite side of the earth, was preparing the way for the rise of a new Imperial family whose vicissitudes were to prove a blessing or a curse to the Commonwealth, calamitous or prosperous to themselves. While Galba was still alive, Titus Vespasianus¹ had been sent from Judaea to Rome by his father, for the ostensible purpose of paying homage to the Emperor, and because the young man was of full age for seeking public office. The multitude, however, with its usual propensity for invention, had spread a report that he had been sent for to be adopted by Galba—a rumour which found aliment in the old age and childlessness of that Emperor, and in the incapacity of the citizens to refrain from canvassing many names till some one person should be selected.

Weight was added to the rumour by the character

Meanwhile in the East a new Imperial family was arising.

Titus dispatched to Rome to do homage to Galba.

Character of Titus.

¹ The name of Vespasian as a possible candidate for power has already been whispered (i. 10, 46, 50); but he now appears more fully upon the scene. Born at Reate in the Sabine country in A.D. 9 as the second son of a humble father, Flavius Sabinus, he took to himself the cognomen of *Vespasianus* after his mother Vespasia Polla, who was a person of some position. His elder brother retained the paternal name of Flavius Sabinus. Vespasian was a tough soldier and had won promotion by good service. Under Claudius he

had been *legatus legionis*, commanding the 2nd legion (*Augusta*) both in Germany and in Britain; in Britain he fought thirty battles and conquered the Isle of Wight. He was *cos. suf.* for two months in A.D. 51; under Nero he was *proconsul of Africa*, where according to Tac. he earned a bad name (ii. 97); and in A.D. 66 he had been put in command of the Judæan army as *legatus Augusti pro praetore* (see nn. on Ann. i. 16 and 17). Titus was Vespasian's elder son, Domitianus the younger.

He turns back on hearing at Corinth of Galba's death.

of Titus himself. He was a man equal to any position, however exalted, being handsome in face and dignified in bearing; his father's prosperous fortunes, the utterances of seers, and even accidental circumstances, were received as omens by minds already inclined to believe. On arriving at Corinth in Achaia, he received certain intelligence of Galba's death; some affirmed that Vitellius was up in arms and war begun. Alarmed by this news, he gathered a few friends in council, and thus reviewed the situation:—

If he went on to Rome, he would receive no thanks for an act of homage destined for another; he would be a hostage in the hands of either Otho or Vitellius. If he turned back, he would no doubt incur the victor's displeasure: but who was to be the victor? and would not the son be excused if the father went over to the victor's side? If, again, Vespasian were to aim at Empire for himself, all cause of offence would have to be forgotten in the call to arms.

Tossed thus as he was between hope and fear by these and such-like arguments, hope carried the day. Some believe that it was a passion for Queen Berenice¹ that made him turn back: but though his youthful mind was not insensible to that lady's charms, he never suffered that passion to stand in the way of his actions. As a youth he enjoyed all the pleasures of his age; but in his own reign he proved more self-restrained than in that of his father.

Coasting therefore along Achaia and Asia, and leaving the latter country to his left, he made for the islands of Rhodes and Cyprus, and thence by a bolder

He visits the temple of Paphian Venus in Cyprus.

¹ This beautiful lady was daughter of Herod Agrippa I. (therefore great-grand-daughter of Herod the Great), and sister to Herod Agrippa II. She married, first her uncle Herod, made

king of Chalcis by Claudius; secondly, Polemon, king of Pontus and Cilicia; and finally lived with her brother, Agrippa II.

course¹ to Syria; and as the fancy took him to visit the Temple of the Paphian Venus,² so famous among foreigners and natives, I will shortly record the origin of this worship, the ceremonial of the Temple, and the form, peculiar to this place, under which the Goddess is adored.

- 3 Ancient tradition assigns to King Aerias³ the foundation of the Temple: some maintain that that was the name of the Goddess herself. A more recent account is that the Temple was consecrated by Cinyras;³ that the Goddess herself came to land there after springing out of the sea, but that the science and art of divination was imported, having been introduced by the Cilician Tamiras under an arrangement whereby the descendants of both families should preside over the ceremonies. At a later period, lest the royal race should have no point of superiority over that of the stranger, the foreign family relinquished the art which they had themselves introduced; and only the Cinyrad priest is now consulted. Votaries may offer what victims they choose; but they must be of the male sex. The surest indications are given by the entrails of kids. No blood may be poured upon the altars; only prayer and pure fire

Account of the temple and its ritual.

¹ The phrase *audentioribus spatiis*, for 'the open sea,' reminds one what timid sailors the ancients were. They coasted whenever they could, and generally laid up for winter. Even on the direct route from Greece to Italy Horace does not expect Asterie's impatient lover Gyges to cross the strait from Oricum to Brundisium until the return of spring (Od. iii. 7, 1-4).

² This famous temple of Aphrodite (identical with the Phoenician Astarte) was at Paphos, situated at some little distance from the sea, in the SW. extremity of the island of Cyprus. 'Few cities have ever been so much sung and glorified by the poets' (Dict. Geog. ii.

p. 548a). Tac. alone, here and in Ann. iii. 62 (where the Cyprians set forth before the Senate the claim of the Paphian temple to a right of asylum), names the older tradition assigning its foundation to Aerias. It was a grand temple, of which remains are still visible. It was restored by Vespasian, perhaps out of gratitude to the oracle; and is represented on his coins.

³ Son of Apollo, king of Cyprus, and father of Adonis. Besides being priest of the temple, he was regarded by the Cyprians as an inventor of useful arts, especially those of war: he presented Agamemnon with a breast-plate (Il. xi. 20).

Strange image of the Goddess.

may be offered on them; no rain ever moistens them though they stand in the open air. The image of the Goddess is not in human form, but has a circular shape, rising continuously from a broad base to a fine point at the top,¹ like the turning-posts in the Circus. The meaning of this is unknown.

Titus receives encouraging answers from the priest,

After inspecting the costly regal gifts and other objects which the Greek mind, with its love for antiquity, assigns to a dim and distant past, Titus inquired first about his own voyage. Assured of a prosperous course over a tranquil sea, he sacrificed a number of victims, and then put some dark questions about himself. The priest, whose name was Sostratus, perceiving that the entrails were all alike favourable, and that the Goddess looked approvingly on some great enterprise, gave a brief and ordinary answer for the moment, and then, granting a private interview,² disclosed the future. Titus made his way back to his father in high spirits, bringing with him a great accession of confidence to the hesitating minds of the army and the provincials. 4

and returns in high spirits to his father.

¹ This laboured and circumlocutory expression for a cone—one of the few distinctly pedantic phrases to be found in Tac.—seems to be due to his desire, for some reason, to avoid the use of the technical term *conus*. Yet that word is used by Lucr. in describing the effect of perspective upon a portico resting on pillars (*Paulatim trahit angusti fastigia conis*, iv. 429; cp. 431), while the word *meta* itself, which Tac. here uses at last to explain what he means, was also used in the same sense, as in *buxus in metas emittitur* (Plin. H. N. xvi. 16, 28, § 70), and in *metas foenum exstruere* of cone-shaped haycocks (Col. ii. 18, 2). The word *meta* itself means 'a measuring mark,' being specially used of the turning points at the two extremities of the *spina* round which charioteers in the Circus had skilfully to guide their chariots; *metaque fervidis*

= *Evitata rotis* (Hor. Od. i. 1, 5-6). These *metae* were each formed of a cluster of pillars shaped like cones; hence the word came to signify a cone. It is used in that sense by Servius in his note on Aen. i. 720 in describing this very image: *apud Cyprios Venus in modum umbilici, vel ut quidam volunt, metae colitur*. The cone was an emblem of Astarte at Byblus, and of older deities elsewhere: but the precise significance of such an emblem remains as obscure as it was in the time of Tacitus (Dr. J. G. Frazer, *Golden Bough*, Adonis, 1914, p. 35).

² This is usually explained as though the secret interview was offered by the priest; but it suits at once the Latin, the sense, and the dignity of the priest himself, better to suppose that it was asked for (*petito*) by Titus.

Vespasian had well-nigh concluded¹ the Judæan war. Nothing remained but the siege of Jerusalem, an undertaking formidable rather from the mountainous character of the site,² and the invincible superstition of the inhabitants, than because their forces were strong enough to endure the extremities of a siege. Vespasian himself, as above related,³ had three Legions, inured to war, under his command; Mucianus had four.⁴ These last had seen no service; but they had been saved from lethargy by an ambition to rival the glories of the neighbouring army, and they had gained as much in vigour from a period of unbroken rest, and by escaping the hardships of war,⁵ as the other army had acquired of hardihood by undergoing its toil and dangers.⁶ Each General had his auxiliaries

Approaching siege of Jerusalem.

Forces of Vespasian and Mucianus.

¹ Though the verb *profigare* is naturally used in the sense of entire overthrow, the passages quoted by Spooner and other edd. show that in certain places it means only as here 'to bring almost to an end': *profigatam iam bello ac pæne sublato* 'practically ended' (Cic. Fam. xii. 30, 2); *coepit profigatæ opera a patre meo perfecti* (Mon. Ancyr. 20).

² In a vague sense, the whole site of Jerusalem and its suburbs might be called *mons*. According to Josephus, Jerusalem originally occupied two hills, the one being the city of King David, or Mount Zion, the other and lower eminence being called Acra. In the time of Tac. practically four hills were included; (1) Bezetha; (2) Acra; (3) the so-called Mount Moriah, on which was the Temple; and (4) the Western height, called Mount Zion. But these sites are disputed. See n. on v. rr.

³ *I.e.* in i. 10. The three legions under Vespasian were the 5th (*Macedonica*); the 10th (*Fretensis*); and the 15th (*Apollinaris*).

⁴ The four legions under Mucianus were the 3rd (*Gallica*); the 4th (*Scythica*); the 6th (*Ferrata*); and the 12th (*Fulminata*). The 3rd, however, had been transferred in the last days of Nero to Moesia (chaps. 74 and 85).

The others were stationed mainly in the towns of Syria; their headquarters were at Antioch; those of the Judæan army at Caesarea. The 4th (*Scythica*) is not mentioned by name by Tac.

⁵ Two years of active warfare in Judæa had no doubt done much to harden Vespasian's troops. But in general, in the Syrian legions, life was easy and discipline slack. When Corbulo began operations in his Eastern command in A.D. 58 his army was unfit to face an enemy, the soldiers being described as 'smart money-making gentry whose soldiering had been done in towns' (Ann. xiii. 35). See also chap. 80 below, where Mucianus excites the Syrian army by telling them that Vitellius had resolved to transfer them to rugged Germany, and bring over the German legions *in Syriam ad militiam opulentam quietamque*.

⁶ M here reads *inexpertis belli labor*. Most edd. are offended by the repetition of *labor*, which occurs in the preceding sentence; and by the violent nature of the phrase 'the labours of a war which they had not experienced,' when what he really means to say is 'their not having experienced the labours of a war.' But, as we have seen, Tac. is careless of awkward repetitions; and the harshness of the phrase is only an extreme instance of Tacitean style. It

of horse and foot, his fleets¹ and allied Princes;² each enjoyed an equal, though a different, reputation.

Soldierly
qualities of
Vespasian.

Vespasian was a keen soldier. He would march in front of his men, and choose the spots for encampment; he would work day and night over his plans, and himself take part in the fighting, if need were; content with any food that came, scarce distinguishable in dress and bearing from any common soldier, had he only been free from avarice, he might have been ranked with the Generals of olden days.

Contrast
with Muci-
anus.

Mucianus, on the contrary, was a magnificent person. In wealth, and in everything else, he lived on a scale above that of private life: more ready of speech than Vespasian, he had more skill and foresight in the conduct of civil affairs: the virtues of the two men without the faults of either would have formed an admirable temperament for an Emperor.³

Their rela-
tions to
each other.

As Governors of adjoining provinces—Syria and Judaea—they had been at variance, and jealous of each other; but on the death of Nero they gave up

is not more unnatural than *uno amne discretis conexum odium* (i. 65). Tac. apparently could not resist the pleasure of doubling his meaning by adding *inexpertus* to *belli*. If it were lawful to offer a conjecture, the reading *inexpertus* instead of *inexpertus* would remove all difficulty. But the various conjectures offered for *labor*, such as *ardor*, *amor*, *pudor*, *dolor*, *rubor*, *casus*, etc., are all beside the mark and unsatisfactory.

¹ Besides the fleet off Pontus in the Black Sea (ii. 83 and iii. 47), there were stations for vessels at Seleucia (the port of Antioch) and in Egypt.

² These princes were (1) Antiochus, a Seleucid, king of Commagene, a mountainous district in the N. of Syria, between the Euphrates and Mount Taurus. See map in Vol. I. (Annals i.-vi.). Tiberius joined it to the province

of Syria in A.D. 17; in A.D. 38 it was restored to Antiochus; in A.D. 72 Vespasian joined it finally to Syria. (2) Agrippa Herodes II., son of Agrippa Herodes I., and brother of Berenice, now king of a considerable portion of Palestine. It was before this prince that St. Paul defended himself (Acts xxv. and xxvi.). (3) Sohaemus, king of Emesa and Sophene, a small district in SW. Armenia, separated from Cappadocia by the Euphrates; Nero gave this kingdom to Sohaemus in A.D. 54 (Ann. xiii. 7).

³ It is interesting to compare this account of Mucianus with the more elaborate and harsher view of his character given in i. 10. There is no inconsistency between the two delineations; each is admirable in itself.

their animosity and made common cause. In the first instance friends had intervened; but it was Titus who became the chief bond of concord between them, putting an end to unworthy rivalry in view of their common interests, being a man specially fitted both by nature and by training to attract even such a person as Mucianus.

The Tribunes, Centurions, and common soldiers were brought over to the cause by their energy or their indolence, by the calls of virtue or of pleasure, according to their several natures.

6 Before the arrival of Titus, both armies had taken the oath of allegiance to Otho. News had travelled with its usual speed; and the East, after long and profound peace, was slow to move¹ to the Civil War for which she now began to prepare. For in the past, all the great Civil Wars had broken out in Italy or in Gaul, and had been fought with Western forces. The Generals who had been pursued by Civil War across the sea—Pompey, Cassius, Brutus, and Antony—had all come to disastrous ends; and in Syria and Judaea the Caesars had been less often seen than heard of. There had been no mutiny in the Eastern Legions; nothing but hostile demonstrations, with varying results, against the Parthians. During the recent Civil War, the East alone had enjoyed peace undisturbed; after that it had been loyal to Galba. When, however, it was noised abroad that Otho and Vitellius were preparing, in impious strife, to make plunder of² the commonwealth, the soldiers began

The East and its armies, slow to move to war,

¹ It is difficult to give the whole force of the phrase *tarda mole civilis belli*. The idea is that of some huge weight which it takes labour to move. Cp. *tota mole belli secuturus* (i. 61) and *tanta mole belli* (ii. 16).

² The meaning of *raptum ire* 'to seize with violence,' or 'make plunder of,' is made clear by Ann. iv. 1, *quo facinore dominationem raptum ierit Seianus*.

to murmur and to cast an eye upon their own strength:—

began now
to feel con-
scious of
their
strength;
but

Were all the prizes of Empire to go to others? Were they alone to be forced to endure servitude? They had seven Legions ready to hand, with all the auxiliaries of Syria and Judaea; continuous with these countries there was Egypt on the one side, with two Legions, on the other Cappadocia, Pontus, and all the outposts on the frontiers of Armenia; there was Asia and the other Provinces, rich alike in men and money; there were the islands, and lastly the sea itself, so helpful for warlike preparations, and so secure.

their
leaders re-
solved to
hold their
hand for
the present.

The leaders were well aware of the feelings of 7
their men; but they resolved to wait on while the others fought:—

In Civil War, they thought, no firm and loyal agreement could be arrived at between conquerors and conquered: it mattered not whether fortune made Otho or Vitellius the survivor. Prosperity bred insolence in the best of leaders; and what with the dissensions among their soldiers, and their own profligacy and incapacity, these men would perish under their own vices: war would be fatal to the one, and victory to the other.

Warlike measures, therefore, were for the time deferred, Vespasian and Mucianus falling in at the last moment with the concert long established among their followers. Of these the better sort were moved by love of country; many by the sweets of plunder; others by embarrassments in their own affairs.¹

¹ Debt in Rome, as elsewhere, had been the fruitful source of political commotion. It was debt that first drove the plebeians to rise against patrician rule; it was debt that brought about the conspiracy of Catiline; it was debt that drove the Aedui under Sacrovir to

rise against Rome in the reign of Tiberius. The rapidity with which money could be made or squandered in Rome during the last days of the Republic, the reckless scheming of her great men to build up or to repair their fortunes, were among the main causes

Thus good and bad alike, from various motives, were all equally keen for war.

8

About this time Achaia and Asia were vainly alarmed by the supposed advent of Nero;¹ for there had been various rumours about his death, and many believed or imagined that he was still alive. The attempts and fortunes of other pretenders shall be related in the course of this work; in this case the impostor was a slave from Pontus²—others said a freedman from Italy—whose accomplishments as a singer and a harp-player, added to some likeness of feature, gave credibility to the fraud. Gathering round him some destitute and vagabond deserters whom he beguiled with great promises, he took to the sea; stress of weather driving him to the island of Cythnus, he there gained over some soldiers who were on their way from the East; those who refused to join him he put to death. Having plundered the traders and armed the most able-bodied of their slaves, he employed all his arts to win over the Centurion Sisenna, who in the name of the Syrian army was bringing a pair of clasped right hands³ to the Praetorians as a sign of friendship.

Achaia and Asia alarmed by the appearance of a pretended Nero;

At last Sisenna, fearing for his life, hurriedly left the island. The alarm then spread far and wide; men restless for change, and disgusted at the present

that brought the Republic to an end. All her most powerful men were overwhelmed with debt at some period of their lives; and there was no simpler or more attractive method of extinguishing debt than that of political agitation. Nero's régime had been one of extravagance and dissipation, and there was nothing of which the Empire stood more in need than a frugal Vespasian to bring order once more into her finances. See Tac.'s disquisition on the lust for wealth in chap. 38.

¹ Pretenders of this kind were not

uncommon. In A.D. 16 much commotion was caused by an impostor called Clemens who had been a slave of Agrippa Postumus, and who pretended to be that prince (Ann. ii. 39). Suet. tells of a person who in A.D. 88 pretended to be Nero, and who received much support from the Parthians (Nero, 57); other impostures of the same kind are described in ii. 72 and iii. 47.

² The word *Pontus* here, as usually in the Histories, refers to the country, not to the sea.

³ See i. 54, 2.

state of affairs, were excited by the great name of Nero; and the movement was making more noise every day when an accident put an end to it.

The Provinces of Galatia¹ and Pamphylia² had been 9
 assigned by Galba to Calpurnius Asprenas. Two triremes from the fleet at Misenum had been given him as an escort, with which he anchored at the island of Cythnus.³ The captains of these ships were summoned in the name of Nero; and the impostor himself, assuming a dejected air, and appealing to the loyalty of his own old soldiers, besought them to land him either in Syria or Egypt. The captains, wavering or affecting to waver, told him they must speak to their men, and promised to return when these had been gained over. But they reported everything faithfully to Asprenas, by whose orders the vessel was captured, and the man, whoever he was, was put to death. The body, which was remarkable for the eyes, the hair, and the savage expression of the face, was conveyed to Asia and thence to Rome.

In a distracted state, fluctuating between liberty 10
 and license on account of the frequent change of its rulers, the most trivial matters gave rise to great commotions. Vibius Crispus,⁴ a man whose wealth,

the impostor is overtaken at Cythnus and put to death.

Impeachment of Annius Faustus by Vibius Crispus;

¹ Galatia was always an Imperial province. Its extent varied at different times; its capital was Ancyra.

² The small coast district of Pamphylia, lying between Cilicia and Lycia, had originally formed part of Cilicia when that province was established in B.C. 66; in B.C. 25 it became a province by itself. In A.D. 43 it was joined to Lycia, which adjoined it on its other or W. side; Galba handed over the government to the governor of Galatia. Under Vespasian, Pamphylia and Lycia were reunited as a single Imperial province.

³ Cythnus (now *Thermia*) was an

island some 20 miles SE. of Cape Sunium, the extreme S. point of Attica.

⁴ Vibius Crispus and Eprius Marcellus were two of the most famous orators and delators—probably the most famous—of the Neronian and Flavian periods, and as such are always treated with contumely by Tacitus. Eprius especially, as the accuser of Thræsea, excites his utmost wrath; on the occasion of that trial, Tac. describes him as a coarse bully, 'hellowing out' his charges against Thræsea 'in a savage and blustering manner, his eyes and his face aflame.' The two men are coupled together in iv. 42 and 43; and in

influence, and talents might rank him among the eminent, rather than among the good, impeached before the Senate a Knight of the name of Annius Faustus,¹ who had practised delation in the time of Nero. For not long before, during the reign of Galba, the Fathers had decreed that accusers should be brought to trial. That decree had been variously applied, being enforced or disregarded according as the person accused was poor or powerful. But it was still a formidable weapon;² and as Crispus employed it with special force³ in attacking the accuser of his own brother, he carried with him a great part of the Senate in demanding the destruction of Faustus, undefended and unheard. Others again were inclined to favour the accused just because of the great influence of his accuser; these called for delay, and for a specification of the charges:—

the *Dialogue*, where they receive more respectful treatment, they are put forward by Afer (the champion of oratory as against poetry) as the most conspicuous instances of orators who had not only reaped the highest fame, and great wealth, from the exercise of their art, but had also rendered the greatest services to the state—in the capacity no doubt of public prosecutors—while to Vespasian himself their friendship had been of greater value than any benefits he could confer on them in return. Of Crispus we have a more favourable account in Juvenal, who speaks of his *incunda senectus* and his *mite ingenium*; 'no man more fitted,' he adds, 'to be Domitian's counsellor if only he had dared to say what he thought, and to stake his life upon the truth' (Sat. iv. 81-93). Similarly, when Tac. contrasts the manner of Crispus with that of Eprius, he speaks of the former as *renidens* (iv. 43); a trait confirmed by Quintilian, who without dwelling on his weakness of character describes Crispus as *vir ingenii incundi et elegantis* (v. 13, 48), and as *incundus et delectationi natus* (x. 1, 119). An

amusing saying is attributed to him by Suetonius. Domitian used to spend hours in catching flies and impaling them on his stilus. Some would-be interviewer inquired of Crispus, 'Has Caesar any one with him?' 'Not even a fly,' was his reply (Dom. 3).

¹ Of Annius Faustus nothing is known.

² The reading of M here is *retinebat adhuc terroris*, which has been variously emended by the edd. *Adhuc* must obviously be read for *adhuc*: but no other change is necessary. *Terroris* may be taken as a partitive Genitive after *retinebat*, in the same manner as *reconciliationis* after *adhibens* in i. 71 (where see n.). To add *aliquid* before *terroris* is unnecessary.

³ The meaning of *propria vi* is doubtful. The usual interpretation is that Crispus brought all his own influence, as well as the terms of the law, to bear upon the case. But the words of the immediate context (*delatorem fratris sui*) seem to suggest that the *propria vis*—the special authority with which Crispus spoke—came from the fact that he was avenging his brother.

However odious and guilty the man might be, he should be given a hearing in the usual way.

Faustus
is con-
demned.

This view prevailed at the time, and the trial was postponed for a few days; but in the end Faustus was condemned, though by no means with that general assent which his evil character deserved. For people remembered how Crispus himself had made profit out of similar accusations; it was not the punishment that they objected to, but the man who called for it.

The armies
of Dalmatia
and Pan-
nonia obey
Otho's call.

Meanwhile the war had begun well for Otho; the armies of Dalmatia and Pannonia were marching in compliance with his orders. These consisted of four Legions,¹ from each of which two thousand men were sent on in front, the Legions themselves following at a moderate distance behind. The Legions were the 7th,² which had been raised by Galba, and the veteran 11th, 13th and 14th, of which the last named had gained great glory by quelling the British

¹ These four legions formed the main strength of Otho's army; and the issue of the war depended upon their reaching the theatre of war in time. Of these the 7th (*Galbiana*) and the 13th (*Gemina*) were in Pannonia, their headquarters being at Poetovio. The 11th (*Claudia*) and the famous 14th (*Gemina Martia Victrix*) were in Dalmatia: their headquarters are not exactly known. The distance from Poetovio to Aquileia, where these two armies would concentrate, was about 150 miles; from Scodra in Dalmatia about 400. From Aquileia to Placentia, where the first shock of war took place, was 200 miles more. Thus the whole distance to Placentia for the Dalmatian army was 600 miles; for the Pannonian army 350 miles; for Otho and the Roman army it was 300 miles. The Pannonian legions being in an outlying province, were probably more ready to march at once than the city troops with Otho; and any effort on their part might have brought them first

upon the scene, and in any case as soon as Otho. Caecina, no doubt, had only 250 miles to march from his headquarters at Vindonissa; but he was detained by his excursion against the Helvetii, and had the difficulties of an Alpine pass to face. Valens, from Lower Germany, had at least some 750 miles to march (see n. on i. 61); and it is impossible to acquit the Othonian armies of having failed in their first object—to be in force upon the Po before the arrival of the armies from Germany.

² There were two legions with the same number 7; the 7th (*Galbiana*) here mentioned, quartered in Pannonia; and the 7th (*Claudia*) at this time in Moesia. The *Galbiana* had been raised in Spain by Galba against Nero; it accompanied Galba to Rome (i. 6), and was afterwards sent by him to Pannonia. The 11th and 13th legions are called *veteranae* in contrast to the newly raised 7th.

rebellion.¹ Nero had added to its reputation by selecting it before all the others; hence its long fidelity to that prince, and its enthusiasm for Otho. But the very confidence of the Legions in their strength made them slow to move; the horse and foot of the auxiliaries marched before them.

The city itself also supplied a formidable force, consisting of five Praetorian Cohorts, with their squadrons of cavalry,² and the 1st Legion,³ besides two thousand gladiators—a disreputable kind of auxiliary no doubt, but one of which even the strictest commanders have availed themselves in time of civil war.⁴ These troops were put under the command of Anniius Gallus,⁵ who was sent on with Vestricius Spurinna⁶ to hold the line of the Po, seeing that Otho's original plan of confining Caecina to Gaul had been frustrated by his crossing the Alps.

Force supplied by the city.

Otho himself took with him a picked body of his guards, the rest of the Praetorian Cohorts,⁷ and the Praetorian veterans,⁸ with a strong contingent of marines.⁹ No lethargy or luxury disgraced his march;

¹ The 14th had borne the brunt of the great march of Suetonius Paulinus across England, and of the battle in which the rebellion of Boudicca was quelled, in A.D. 61. In v. 16 Cerialis addresses them as *domitores Britanniae*. See n. on i. 59, 4.

² These would be the single troops of cavalry attached to each Praetorian Cohort.

³ This was the legion raised by Nero out of the *classarii* (i. 6). Sometimes, as here, it is called simply *prima*; sometimes *classica* (i. 31), or *prima classicorum* (ii. 67); sometimes *prima Adiutrix*, a title apparently conferred upon it by Otho after its first battle (ii. 43, iii. 44).

⁴ Notably by Decimus Brutus when besieged in Mutina by Mark Antony in B.C. 43.

⁵ For Anniius Gallus see n. on i. 87.

⁶ The most distinguished, after

Suetonius Paulinus, and certainly the most loyal, of Otho's captains. His splendid defence of Placentia will be recounted below. He was also a lyric poet, and a friend of the younger Pliny, who gives him a delightful character in his old age (Epp. iii. 1).

⁷ *I.e.* the remaining four Praetorian Cohorts; the five previously mentioned having been sent on with Anniius Gallus and Spurinna.

⁸ These were the Praetorians who having served their full time of sixteen years were kept under a separate *vexillum* with special privileges under the name of *vexillarii*.

⁹ These were part of the naval force which had been arranged in *numeros legionis* (i. 87), *i.e.* in maniples and cohorts, but had not yet been formed into a regular legion like the 1st legion mentioned above.

he wore a cuirass of iron, and marched on foot in front of the standards, roughly clad and unkempt, in a manner bearing no likeness to his reputation.

Fortune smiled on him at the outset. The com- 12
mand of the sea, secured by his fleet, made him master of the greater part of Italy, as far as the Maritime Alps;¹ so he appointed Suedius Clemens, Antonius Novellus, and Aemilius Pacensis to make an attack upon that district and invade Narbonese Gaul.² Pacensis, however, was put in chains by his insubordinate troops; Antonius Novellus carried with him no authority; while Clemens, who courted popularity with his men, was as powerless to maintain discipline as he was eager for battle. Not heeding that they were in Italy, amid the lands and homes of their own countrymen, they burnt, ravaged, and devastated town and country as though they were in a foreign and hostile land, and with all the more grievous results that there were nowhere any preparations for resistance. The fields were full of crops, the houses stood open, and their owners came forth with their wives and children in all the security of peace to find themselves enveloped in all the horrors of war.

The Maritime Province was at that time under

¹ The Maritime Alps formed a small district between Liguria and the Narbonensis, on each side of the river Varus. In spite of its name, however, it did not come down quite to the sea coast.

² The appointment of these generals has been mentioned in l. 87. This act of gross insubordination in putting Pacensis into chains (*i.e.* apparently hand-cuffs) was the precursor of many similar acts during the war. Both sides suffered much from indiscipline during the war, but that of Otho the most. The whole circumstances under which the war arose were such as to relax the

old principles of discipline and obedience; but in spite of all the furious disorders and mutinies which occurred during its course, it is marvellous how well on the whole the military system of the Romans bore the strain put upon it, and how promptly the armies returned to their old state of discipline when the civil war was over. Pacensis is not named again until iii. 73, when he is mentioned among a few other distinguished names as perishing inside the Capitol, having fought bravely to the last.

Naval
attack upon
Narbonese
Gaul;

misbe-
haviour of
the troops.

They are
resisted by
Maurus.

the Procurator Marius Maturus. This man called out the local tribe (for there was no deficiency of young men) to drive the Othonians out of the Province. But these hillmen were cut to pieces and dispersed in the first encounter, as might be expected with men who had been hurriedly brought together, who knew nothing of camps or discipline, to whom victory brought no glory, and flight no disgrace.

- 13 Exasperated by this resistance, the Othonians turned their wrath against the town of Albintimilium.¹ The rustics being poor and poorly armed, no booty could be got out of them, while their swiftness of foot and knowledge of the country enabled them to escape capture; so the soldiers glutted their greed by pillaging the innocent inhabitants. Great indignation was roused against them by the noble conduct of a Ligurian woman who had concealed her son, and was supposed by the soldiers to have hidden away her money along with him. Being put to torture to disclose her son's hiding-place, '*It is here!*' she cried, pointing to her womb; nor could either threats or death itself make her swerve from this noble and courageous answer.²

The Othonians pillage the town of Albintimilium.

- 14 Hurried messengers conveyed the news to Fabius Valens that Otho's fleet was threatening Narbonese³

Valens sends a detachment to

¹ Albintimilium or Albium Intimilium (*Ventimiglia*) was a town on the coast of Liguria (and therefore not within the *Alpes maritimae*) about 16 miles to the E. of Portus Monoeci (*Monaco*).

² Special interest attaches to this incident from the fact that Tacitus himself records how Agricola's mother was slain on this occasion by the *classis Othoniana licenter vaga*, and the greater part of her patrimony devastated (*Agr. 7*). It thus appears that the attack on Ventimiglia was the work of the fleet only. The outrage was a

wanton one, as the plundering of that Ligurian town could have no effect upon Narbonese Gaul, which was the professed object of attack.

It is to be noted that Tac. gives no definite indication of where the first battle was fought, nor whether the attack on Ventimiglia was made on the advance, or the retreat, of the invading force; nor yet what became of the fleet and military force after these operations were over.

³ The Narbonensis was the most completely Romanised part of Gaul, and contained a number of flourishing

protect the
Narbonnese
province.

Gaul, which had sworn allegiance to Vitellius; envoys also arrived from the Colonies imploring help. Valens at once dispatched two Tungrian¹ cohorts, four squadrons of cavalry, together with the whole mounted force of the Treveri, under the command of Julius Classicus.² Part of this force was left in the colony of Forum Julii;³ for if the whole army had marched inland, the enemy's fleet might have hurried on by sea unopposed. Twelve squadrons of cavalry, with a picked body of infantry, marched out to meet the enemy; added to these was an old-established local cohort of Ligurian auxiliaries,⁴ and five hundred Pannonian recruits⁵ who had not yet joined the standards.

The Vitellians are
worsted in
an engage-
ment;

The Othonians joined battle at once in the following order.⁶ Part of the marine force, interspersed

colonies, famous to this day and full of Roman remains—Aquae Sextiae (*Aix*); Narbo Martius (*Narbonne*); Arelate (*Arles*); Arausio (*Orange*); Nemausus (*Nîmes*); Vienna (*Vienne*), etc. These were all defenceless; no wonder that they were alarmed by the Othonian raid.

¹ The Tungri occupied a part of SE. Belgium, near the modern *Spa*; Tac. tells us that they were the first Germans to cross the Rhine and expropriate the Gauls (*Germ.* 2). We hear of them later on as helping to hatch the conspiracy against the Romans in the Agrippinensian Colony (*iv.* 55), and as fighting against Rome along with the Nervii (*iv.* 66).

² This noble Treveran, of whom we shall hear much as joint organiser of the revolt of Civilis against Rome, was at this time commander of a body of native Treveran cavalry officered by Romans or Romanised Gauls (*see iv.* 55). The Treveri are called Gauls by Caesar; but Tac. tells us that both the Treveri and the Nervii boasted of a German origin (*Germ.* 28). It is evident from the narrative of the war with Civilis that they had strong German leanings.

³ Forum Julii, the modern *Fréjus*, was an important colony and harbour at

the mouth of the river Argenteus, and about half-way between Telo Martius (*Toulon*) and the Var. It was here that Augustus stationed the ships captured at the battle of Actium (*Ann.* *iv.* 5); whether the colony was founded by him or by Julius Caesar is uncertain.

⁴ That the Ligurian militia fought on the Vitellian side implies that the battle was fought in Liguria, and therefore E. of the river Var—perhaps near the site of the modern Nice. If so, the Othonians can never have reached the *Narbonensis* at all.

⁵ These Pannonian recruits had probably been ordered by Otho to join the German army, where they would form part of a regular auxiliary cohort. In *chap.* 17 we find that Caecina, on arriving at Cremona, there captured a whole cohort of Pannonians, evidently forming part of the advance guard of Otho's army.

⁶ The operations which follow are not very clear. The alternative of marching towards the interior could only have been adopted if the Othonians had slipped further along the coast to the W., with a view to attacking the rich and defenceless parts of the province. This evidently is what the deputations from the colonies must have feared. As a matter of fact, the Othonians never

with the country folk, was posted on rising ground near the sea; the Praetorians occupied the whole level space between the sea and the hills; while in touch with them the ships, with their prows turned towards the land and ready for action, presented a threatening front along the shore. The Vitellians, who were stronger in cavalry than in foot, posted their hillmen on the adjoining heights, and drew up their cohorts in close column behind the cavalry. The squadrons of the Treveri, engaging the enemy incautiously, were met in front by the veteran Praetorians, while at the same time stones were showered upon them from the flanks by the rustics, who proved themselves skilful throwers; mixed up as they were with the soldiers, brave and cowardly alike showed courage in the moment of victory. To complete the enemy's confusion, a charge was made upon their rear from the ships; encompassed thus on every side, their whole force would have been annihilated, had not night given a check to the victors and afforded cover to the vanquished.

15 The Vitellians, defeated though they were, did not remain inactive. Calling up the auxiliaries, and taking advantage of the negligence which success had engendered, they attacked the enemy, slew the guard, broke into his camp, and created a panic among the ships: till at last, as the alarm gradually subsided, the Othonians took up a position of defence upon an adjoining hill and soon afterwards fell upon the enemy. A terrible slaughter followed; the

a second
indecisive
battle
follows ;

parted from their ships, and never got further than the extreme W. of Liguria. The Vitellians marched eastwards along the coast until they met the enemy, and so took the offensive. Thus, instead of the Othonian force getting behind

the Vitellians, so as to harry the province in its rear, the Vitellians were smart enough to get behind—*i.e.* to the west of—the Othonian force, and so drive it back towards Italy.

commanders of the Tungrian cohorts, after long sustaining the fight, fell under a storm of missiles. The Othonians also suffered severely; for some of their number, pursuing incautiously too far, were cut off by the enemy's cavalry.

and the two
forces draw
off from one
another.

After that, just as if an armistice had been arranged, to guard against a sudden alarm from the fleet on the one side, or from the cavalry on the other, the Vitellians retired to Antipolis,¹ a town in Narbonese Gaul, the Othonians to Albingaunum² in Further Liguria.³

Decumus
Pacarius
vainly tries
to secure
Corsica for
Vitellius.

The fame of this naval success secured Corsica and Sardinia for Otho, together with the adjoining islands. Corsica, however, suffered severely from the rash action of the Procurator Decumus Pacarius, which could have no effect upon the result of so vast a war, and proved fatal to Pacarius himself. As he hated Otho, he resolved to support Vitellius with all the forces of the island—a support which would have been unavailing even if he could have secured it. Calling together the chief men of the island, he disclosed to them his plans, and when two men ventured to oppose him—Claudius Pyrrhicus, commander of the Liburnian squadron⁴ there stationed, and Quintus Certus, a Roman Knight—he ordered them to be put to death. This cowed those present into swearing

¹ Antipolis (the modern *Antibes*) was originally a colony of the Greek colony of Massilia (*Marseille*). It seems to have enjoyed Latin rights (*ius Latii*).

² Albingaunum or Albium Ingaunum (*Albenga*) was far along the coast towards Genoa; the retreat thither of the Othonians meant that they had given up the whole object of their expedition.

³ Miserably as this attempt at a diversion was carried out, it at least succeeded in detaching from Valens a portion of his forces. We do not hear

whether this portion rejoined Valens in time to take part in the decisive action against Otho.

⁴ These were long, narrow, and swift vessels on the pattern of the craft used by the Liburnian pirates on the coast of Illyricum. The fleet of Augustus at the battle of Actium was mainly composed of these vessels; Horace, before the battle, trembles for Maecenas, who with these slight vessels is to encounter the towered battle-ships of the East: *Ibis Liburnis inter alta navium = Amice propugnacula* (E*pod.* 1, 1 and 2).

allegiance to Vitellius ; the ignorant populace, ever ready to share the fears of others, did the same. But when Pacarius proceeded to make a levy, and to subject the undisciplined natives to the fatigues of military duty, they revolted against the unwonted labour, and reflected upon their own weakness :—

They lived upon an island ; Germany and its mighty Legions were far away ; places had been plundered and ravaged by fleets even when protected by troops of horse and foot.

Their minds thus suddenly changed, they did not resort to open violence, but chose a suitable moment for treachery. At a moment when Pacarius had dismissed his company, he was killed, naked and helpless, in his bath ; his attendants were killed also. The murderers sent the heads to Otho, as being those of enemies ; but in the general confusion of the time they got mixed up with greater criminals, and were neither rewarded by Otho nor punished by Vitellius.

17 By this time, as related above, the Silian Horse¹ had opened up Italy, and carried the war across the Alps into a region where Otho had no friends. Not that the inhabitants preferred Vitellius : long peace had broken them to every kind of slavery, and they were ready to welcome the first comer, careless which was the better cause. And so that most fertile quarter of Italy, comprising all the land and cities between the Po and the Alps²—for by this time the cohorts³ sent on by Caecina had arrived—was occupied by the forces of Vitellius. They captured a

Transpa-
dane Italy
now occu-
pied by
Vitellian
forces ;

¹ This was the body of horse stationed on the Po whose adhesion to Vitellius secured for him the cities of Milan, Novara, Ivrea, and Vercelli. See i. 70.

² This of course was only true of the Western half of Lombardy. Com-

munication with the Pannonian and Moesian armies was still unbroken.

³ This advanced guard consisted of Lusitanian and British auxiliaries, some German *vexilla* and the *ala Petriana* (i. 70).

they arrive
at Cre-
mona.

The Bata-
vians cross
the Po.

Spurinna in
command
at Pla-
centia;

Pannonian cohort at Cremona, and cut off a hundred cavalry and a thousand marines¹ between Placentia and Ticinum—a success which elated them so much that not even the river and its banks could hold them back.² Indeed the mere sight of the Po so excited the Batavians and the men from across the Rhine that they suddenly crossed over against Placentia, captured some scouts, and so terrified the remainder that they fled in haste with the false news that Caecina and his whole army were upon them.

Spurinna, who was in command at Placentia, knew 18 that Caecina had not arrived;³ and he determined, in the event of his approach, to keep his men within the walls, and not oppose his own force of

¹ *I.e.* men of the naval legion (1st *Adiutrix*).

² These operations show that Caecina had arrived in time to occupy the whole northern bank of the Po as far East as Cremona; while Otho's main force, instead of meeting Caecina in front by the great Aemilian road which led through Placentia, was compelled to leave the Aemilian road at Mutina (*Modena*) and strike for the Po at the much lower point of Hostilia. This was necessary in order to effect a junction with the Pannonian and Moesian armies, which were now slowly concentrating in the extreme NE. corner of Italy at Aquileia.

Placentia was a place of the utmost importance for this campaign. It stood on the great highway to the north, commanding the passage across the Po. The town was not actually on the river, but at some little distance to the S. of it. Otho's first chance would have been to march straight for Placentia with his Roman army to meet Caecina singlehanded, before he was joined by Valens. His next chance was to wait for the Eastern armies advancing from Aquileia, and meet with his own combined forces the combined armies of Valens and Caecina. By now moving to Hostilia, he lost all chance of carrying out the first plan, that of dealing singly with Caecina; by his subsequent rash movement from Bedriacum he threw

away all the chances of the second plan, committing himself, with only half his forces, against the combined armies of the Vitellians. Such was the strategy of Otho, so lauded by Mr. Henderson.

Ticinum (*Pavia*) was situated close to the point where the river Ticinus (*Ticino*), bringing down the waters of the *Lago Maggiore*, falls into the Po, some 30 or 35 miles above Placentia. It will be remembered that it was on the banks of the Ticinus that Hannibal, after crossing the Alps, had his first brush with the Roman forces under P. Scipio in B.C. 218.

³ The strategic position is clear. Otho has been too late to block the Alpine passes; Caecina has already wrested NW. Lombardy out of his hands, and has advanced to the Po, occupying the N. bank as far as Cremona, and leaving Placentia as yet unassailed upon the other side. Valens with his 40,000 men is in rapid march to join him. Otho sends on Spurinna with three Praetorian Cohorts to hold Placentia, and so bar the highroad to Rome, while the main army of defence, under Annius Gallus, leaving the Aemilian road at Mutina, crosses the Po at Hostilia to await on its northern bank the arrival of the Pannonian and Moesian armies which are to concentrate at Aquileia.

three Praetorian Cohorts,¹ one thousand detached troops,² and a handful of cavalry, to the veteran army of the enemy. The soldiers, however, impatient of command, and ignorant of war, plucked up their standards³ and rushed forth, presenting the points of their weapons to the General when he sought to hold them back, and paying no attention to the Tribunes and Centurions; they even raised the cry that Otho was being betrayed, and that Caecina had been called in. Spurinna had to join in a rashness not his own, at first under compulsion, making afterwards a show of acquiescence, that his opinion might have the greater weight should the mutiny calm down.⁴

his soldiers
compel him
to lead
them out of
the city;

19 Night falling as they came in sight of the Po,⁵ it was

but next
day are

¹ These three cohorts formed part of the advance force sent on under Annius Gallus and Spurinna as mentioned in chap. 11.

² Who these *vexillarii* were is not clear. Any body of troops detached from their regular corps for special service might be called *vexillarii*. They may be some of the detached units which had been in Rome, such as the *electi Illyrici exercitus* or the *Germanici milites* mentioned in i. 31.

³ In the phrase *correptis signis vexillisque* the word *signa* refers specially to the standards of the cohorts and maniples, *vexilla* probably to the standards of the cavalry.

⁴ Henderson calls this account of Tac. 'a silly story, told later in the camp, where generals' actions are always pulled to pieces.' But the story, as given by Tac., does not tell against the general, whose tactful management brought the soldiers to order, but against the soldiers themselves, and it is by no means improbable in itself. Otho's army is represented all through as insubordinate, suspicious of its generals, the men so confident in themselves that they were anxious for battle at the first moment. Caecina's arrival not having been reported or believed in, it was a natural thing for an impetuous soldiery to demand to be led out against the insolent Batavians who had dared to make a raid across the river up to

the walls of their city. Henderson supposes Spurinna to have properly made a reconnaissance in force on the N. side of the river. Plutarch makes no mention of the sortie in the direction of the Po, but he confirms Tac.'s account of the over-confidence and insubordination of the soldiers who were only brought to order by the raid of the Vitellians up to the walls. I cannot see the justice of the sharp criticisms which on this point, as elsewhere, Henderson pronounces upon the judgment and insight of Tac. as an historian. I know of no other account in any other Roman historian in which, not one campaign, but a whole series of campaigns, are so brilliantly and so intelligibly narrated. It was Tac.'s misfortune, not his fault, that he was not acquainted with the principles of modern German strategy.

⁵ There is no reason to change the reading of *M in conspectu Padus*. Heraeus, supposing that Spurinna crossed the river and then struck north, reads *e conspectu*; Classen arbitrarily substitutes *hostis* for *Padus*; Meiser, followed by Spooner, reads *non iam in conspectu*. Henderson also supposes Spurinna to have crossed the river, and to have continued a reconnaissance on the N. bank. But nothing is said of any crossing of the river: and the natural meaning seems to be that the army got no further than the river, and

content to
retire with-
in their
walls.

resolved to entrench a camp. The spirit of the town-bred soldiers broke down under the unaccustomed labour. The older men cursed their own credulity, pointing out how dangerous their situation would be should their few cohorts be surrounded on the open plain by Caecina and his army. Before long a humbler tone prevailed throughout the camp. The Tribunes and Centurions went in among the men, commending the General's foresight in having selected so strong and so well-equipped a Colony for his main base of operations; and finally Spurrinna himself, instead of upbraiding the men for their fault, explained his reasons, and leaving only some scouts behind, conducted the remainder, in a more orderly and obedient state of mind, back to Placentia. There he strengthened the walls, added battlements, raised the height of the towers, and made every preparation, not only for providing arms, but also for securing discipline and willingness to obey—the one thing lacking to a party with whose courage no fault could be found.

Caecina
makes a
well-
ordered
march
through
Italy.

Meanwhile Caecina, as though he had left his 20
cruelty and licentiousness on the other side of the Alps, was making a well-ordered march through Italy. The Municipal and Colonial towns indeed deemed it insolent of him to address toga-clad citizens in a

only then began to realise the difficulties of their position. Henderson further supposes that there was a bridge across the Po near Placentia:—'Above all it was necessary for him (Caecina) to guard his own communications north of the river from the constant menace of interruption by a sally over the bridge from Placentia.' But Tac. makes no mention of a bridge there at this time, nor, so far as I know, does any ancient author; and the point is definitely settled by Nissen, who in his *Italische Landeskunde* (1883-1902),

vol. ii. p. 271, states there was no bridge at Placentia. On p. 201 he says, writing of Cremona, 'The twin town of Placentia is 20 Millien (*i.e.* Roman miles) away on the Via Postumia. Whether this road crossed the Po at Cremona by a permanent bridge (*eine feste Brücke*), is not recorded.' But the narrative of Tac. implies that there was no bridge at Cremona either. To cross the Po at Placentia for a mere reconnaissance, without a bridge, would be a highly dangerous operation.

vari-coloured cloak,¹ and with barbaric trews² upon his legs ; and they took umbrage at his wife Salonina for making herself conspicuous in a purple habit on horse-back—though no one was harmed thereby—just as though it were an offence against themselves. For such is the nature of man that he scans with jealous eyes the new-made prosperity of his neighbour, and demands from none more rigorously some curtailment of their good fortune than from those whom he has once known on an equality with himself.³

Having crossed the Po, Caecina sought by interviews and by promises to detach the Othonians from their allegiance. The same arts were employed upon himself ; and after the fair names of Peace and Concord had been idly bandied to and fro, he directed his whole thoughts and energies to inflicting on Placentia all the terrors of a siege, knowing well that the prestige of his arms would depend upon their success or failure at the beginning.

He determines to attack Placentia.

21 On the first day the attack was by assault, rather than by the skilful devices known to veteran armies : the men marched up to the walls, openly and unprotected, heavy with food and wine. In the course of the conflict the splendid amphitheatre outside the walls was burnt down—whether fired by the brands and balls or fire-arrows⁴ of the besiegers, or by the return discharges⁵ of the besieged. The mob of the

His assault is repulsed with much slaughter.

¹ *I.e.*, tartan.

² Many edd., with insufficient reason, suppose the words *barbarum tegmen* (M has *tegmen*) to be a gloss suggested by Virg. *Æn.* xi. 777 (*barbara tegmina crurum*).

³ A very just and profound observation.

⁴ The word *glandes* here used refers to balls of lead or clay hurled from slings ; there is no exact equivalent in

English. The *missilis ignis* probably refers to the missiles called *falaricae*, winged arrows, with towand pitch round them, discharged from catapults or by hand.

⁵ The Puteolanus seems to have the right reading ; M has *reportans gerunt* over an erasure. F. compares the double reading in *Ann.* xi. 33 *refertur vehitur*, where Put. has *vehitur* only.

town, ever prone to suspect, believed that the fire had been purposely kindled by men from the neighbouring Colonies, out of envy and jealousy of what was the most massive and capacious amphitheatre in Italy. However the accident came about, the inhabitants thought little of it so long as there were worse things to fear; but once the danger was over, they lamented the calamity as though it were the most grievous that could have befallen them.

He prepares for a siege.

Caecina was repulsed with much slaughter, and the night was spent in preparing implements for a siege. The Vitellians constructed mantlets, fascines, and shelter-sheds, for undermining the walls and protecting the assailants; the Othonians provided themselves with stakes and ponderous masses of stone, lead, and brass, to overwhelm the enemy and break down their works. Appeals to feelings of shame and glory were made on both sides. On one side the might of the German and legionary army was the theme of exhortation; on the other the prestige of the Urban and Praetorian Cohorts. The soldiers of the one army were scoffed at as inert and sluggish, demoralised by the theatre and the circus; those of the other as foreigners and barbarians. On either side also the men were goaded on by eulogies or vituperation of Otho or Vitellius; but the abuse afforded a richer material than the laudation.¹

A second assault, in full force,

By early dawn the walls were thronged with 22 defenders, the plain glittered with arms and men.

¹ This passage gives the key to the whole war, and explains the virulence displayed by both sides during its continuance. It was a life and death struggle between the rough country soldiers whom the Praetorians despised as uncouth foreigners, and the privileged and pampered soldiers of the capital.

The epithets bestowed on the Praetorians by their ruder antagonists were not unlike those lavished on our soldiers by the Boers at the beginning of the South African war. But as Tac. himself acknowledges (chap. 19), there was no lack of courage on the part of the Praetorians.

The Legions¹ in close column, the auxiliaries in extended order, assailed the higher parts of the walls with stones and javelins, or assaulted them at close quarters where they were ruinous or undefended. As the German cohorts² came boldly up, the men bare according to their custom, uttering savage cries and waving their shields over their heads, the Othonians poured down javelins upon them with sure and steady aim. Upon the other side the legionaries undermined the walls under the protection of crates and penthouses, erected mounds, and assailed the gates; the Praetorians crashed down upon them huge masses of rock arranged in position for the purpose. Some of the assailants were crushed; others, pierced through or mangled, lay bleeding to death; as panic added to the slaughter, the fire from the walls grew deadlier, and the Vitellians retired discomfited and discredited to their quarters.

is violently
repelled;

Ashamed of an assault so rashly undertaken, and unwilling to remain baffled and derided in his camp, Caecina once more crossed the Po and made for Cremona. On his way he received the submission of Turullius Cerialis with a number of the naval contingent, and a few horsemen under Julius Briganticus.³ The latter was a Batavian in command of cavalry; the former was a first-grade Centurion on friendly terms with Caecina, having served under him in Germany.

and Caecina retires
discomfited
to Cremona.

¹ Tac. uses the plural *legiones*, though there was only one entire legion (the 21st *Rapax*) in Caecina's army. See n. on i. 61.

² These Germans were auxiliaries. According to Tac. their savage cries were chants with words—*sunt illis haec quoque carmina quorum relatu, quem baritum vocant, accendunt animos*

(Germ. 3). So in the battle with the Batavians, *ut virorum cantu, feminarum ululatu sonuit acies* (iv. 18).

³ Of Turullius nothing is known. Julius Briganticus was a nephew of Civilis with whom he was on bad terms *invisus avunculo infensusque* (iv. 70); he died fighting for Rome against his uncle (v. 21).

Annius Gallus, marching to the relief of Placentia, halts at Bedriacum.

As soon as Spurinna learnt in what direction 23
Caecina was marching, he informed Annius Gallus¹ by letter of the safety of Placentia, telling him what had passed, and what were the designs of Caecina. Now Gallus was at that moment bringing up the 1st Legion to the relief of Placentia, not believing that its few cohorts could hold out for a prolonged siege against the powerful German army. When the news reached him that Caecina had been defeated and was on his way to Cremona, he could scarce hold his Legion back; and such was their ardour for battle that they almost broke out in mutiny. He halted at Bedriacum, a village lying between Verona and Cremona, to which two Roman disasters² have given an ill-omened notoriety.

Battle won near Cremona by Martius Macer.

Just about the same time a battle had been won not far from Cremona by Martius Macer. For Martius, who was a man of enterprise, put his gladiators³ into

¹ Where Gallus was when he received the news of the safety of Placentia, is not clear. He was leading the 1st legion to the relief of Placentia; he succeeds with difficulty in halting his impetuous troops at Bedriacum. This implies that he was marching along the N. bank of the Po westwards; but where was he proposing to cross the Po?

² There are two famous battles of Bedriacum, each of which settled for the time the fortunes of the Empire: (1) The battle about to be described below in chaps. 41-44, fought apparently on the 14th of April; and (2) The battle fought on the 27th of October following, in which Antonius Primus secured for Vespasian a crushing defeat of the Vitellians.

The site of Bedriacum is now generally identified with that of the village Calvatone, at the point where the roads from Hostilia (and Mantua) and Verona converge. This was a point of great strategic importance; it was exactly the right, and indeed necessary, position for the army of defence to take up with the twofold object of checking the Vitellian advance on the N. bank of

the Po, and of effecting a junction with the Pannonian and Moesian armies which were now concentrating on Aquileia. Those armies, had the road to Rome been clear, would naturally have crossed the Po at Hostilia to join the Aemilian Road at Modena; but as the enemy was now in force at Cremona, they would keep to the N. bank of the Po and march straight on to join Otho's army at Bedriacum. The exact distance from that spot to Cremona is 22 Roman miles (= 20½ English miles); as the battle now to be described took place at the 12th milestone from Cremona, it is evident that both armies were on the march to meet each other; both, in fact, were acting on the offensive. The Vitellians apparently first marched out 12 miles towards Bedriacum; the Othonians marched out 10 miles to meet them. After the battle the Othonians returned to Bedriacum.

³ It thus appears that the 2000 gladiators had been posted on the S. side of the Po opposite to Cremona—no doubt to meet any 'penetrating' movement at that point on the part of the Vitellians.

boats, and suddenly threw them on to the opposite bank of the Po. There he routed the Vitellian auxiliaries, slaying those who held their ground, while the rest fled to Cremona; but the victors were checked in their pursuit¹ from the fear that reinforcements might come up for the enemy, and change the fortune of the day. This roused the anger of the Othonians, who interpreted every action of their Generals in an evil sense. The most worthless and impudent of the men poured violent and indiscriminate abuse upon Annius Gallus, Suetonius Paulinus, and Marius Celsus—for these two last also had been placed in command by Otho. Conspicuous among the promoters of disorder were Galba's murderers; maddened by the consciousness of their guilt, they wrought general confusion,² now openly preaching sedition, now writing secretly to Otho; while Otho himself, lending a willing ear to the lowest of men, and afraid of the good, was in a state of trepidation, being unstable in good fortune and only showing to advantage in adversity.³ He accordingly sent for his brother Titianus and placed him in command.⁴

Insubordinate condition of the Othonian army.

¹ By whom was this victorious career checked? The raid of the gladiators across the river took place near Cremona (*haud procul Cremona*), and about the same time (*isdem diebus*) Annius Gallus, with the Othonian van, halted at Bedriacum; the generals there can have taken no part in the raid itself or in stopping it. Why then the outburst against those generals? All that Tac. can mean is that the news of the retreat of Martius from an incipient victory served to inflame a feeling already existing in the Othonian army against the slowness of the generals.

² For the phrase *miscere cuncta* see n. on i. 53.

³ In allusion to Otho's suicide, which

in Tac.'s view almost atoned for the errors of his life.

⁴ This fatal appointment of an incompetent brother sealed the fate of Otho. The three generals already appointed to the command were all excellent generals; but Otho was filled with distrust of every one not personally bound to him. He distrusted the Senate as a whole; he distrusted all who had previously distinguished themselves. Titianus (his full name was L. Salvius Otho Titianus) had had no military experience. As proconsul of Asia in A.D. 63-4, when Agricola served under him, he had distinguished himself only by his rapacity; and the best proof of his imbecility is that he was left unharmed by the victorious Vitellians.

Caecina prepares an ambush for the Othonians at 'The Castors.'

Meanwhile Paulinus and Celsus had obtained a great success.¹ Caecina had been mortified by the failure of all his plans, and by the waning reputation of his army. He had been repulsed from Placentia; his auxiliaries had recently been cut to pieces; his scouts had been worsted in a number of encounters too trivial to be recorded; and now that Fabius Valens was drawing near, he was afraid that that General would carry off all the credit of the campaign. Hurrying therefore with more eagerness than discretion to re-establish his reputation, he placed the bravest of his auxiliaries in ambush in a wood overhanging the road at a spot called 'The Castors,'² twelve miles distant from Cremona.³ The cavalry were ordered to advance for some distance along the road, and provoke an encounter; they were then voluntarily to retire and draw on the enemy to pursue until the ambush should spring out upon them.

The plan is betrayed to Paulinus and Celsus,

This plan having been betrayed to the Othonian Generals, Paulinus took command of the foot, Celsus of the horse. The detachment of the 13th Legion,⁴

¹ This must refer to the time before the arrival of Titianus from Rome. The battle recounted in this chap. seems to have taken place on or about the 6th of April. Paulinus and Celsus were still in command; Annius Gallus was not present, having been laid up by an accident (chap. 33).

² There was a temple here to Castor and Pollux; and because the brothers are always named in that order, or because Castor was the more famous of the twins, they are here called collectively 'the Castors.'

³ Caecina certainly suffered no grass to grow under his feet. Foiled at Placentia, he made straight for Cremona, and pushed on to take the offensive at the first possible moment against the main Othonian army, anxious to come to grips with it before the reinforcements from the Danube army could arrive. Henderson finds fault with

Tac. for ignoring the strategic reason for Caecina's forward movement, and only mentioning his jealousy of Valens. But the strategic reason was obvious; it is made perfectly plain by the whole course of Tac.'s narrative, and there was no necessity to restate it. Jealousy of Valens was an extremely probable subsidiary motive; similar motives have often actuated generals in modern armies. And if Tac. seldom or never expounds the ultimate strategic reasons for the operations which he describes, he does not fail to give us the facts from which they can be divined.

⁴ Thus the detachment of 2000 from this important Pannonian legion (*Gemina*) had arrived from Aquileia, the forerunner of the whole army of the Danube. It was little short of madness on Otho's part to commit himself to a decisive struggle before the arrival of the whole force.

with four auxiliary cohorts and 500 horse, were placed on the left; the three Praetorian Cohorts, in deep formation, occupied the causeway;¹ on the right front was the 1st Legion, with two cohorts of auxiliaries and 500 horse. In addition, there was a body of one thousand Praetorian and auxiliary horse,² who were to check a repulse or give a finishing touch to a victory.

25 Before the two lines could intermingle, the Vitellians began to retreat; Celsus, aware of the stratagem, kept his men back, and when the enemy sprang out suddenly upon them, he gradually gave way until the Vitellians, advancing too far, plunged into an ambush themselves, having the auxiliaries on their flank and the legionaries³ in front, while the cavalry, by a sudden movement, closed them in upon the rear. But Suetonius Paulinus did not at once give the battle signal to the infantry. Being naturally slow to act, and one who preferred deliberate and cautious methods to success gained by accident, he ordered the ditches⁴ to be filled up, the ground to be cleared, and his line to be opened out, thinking it soon enough to begin a victory when every precaution had been taken to prevent defeat. This delay gave the Vitellians time to take refuge in some vineyards, where the trailing and tangled branches of the vines presented obstacles to an advance.⁵ There was a wood

who cleverly frustrate it by similar tactics,

¹ The phrase *agger viae* (sometimes called *dorsum*) refers to the raised centre of a great Roman road. This centre consisted of polygonal or square blocks of hard stone, forming a regular paved surface, arched in the middle so as to cast off the water on either side, and resting upon three or four layers of stones, potsherds, concrete, or flattened earth. Hence the usual phrases *munire viam*, and *via munita* of a road so made. We give the

name 'camber' to the raised centre of a well-made road.

² These are the *equitum vexilla* mentioned in chap. 11 as forming part of the army which marched from Rome.

³ Only the 1st legion was on the right front. The *vexillum* of the 13th was in *sinistro cornu*.

⁴ These ditches were probably for irrigation purposes.

⁵ Still at the present day, as in ancient times, the vines in Lombardy

also of some size close by, whence the enemy again issued to the attack, and slew some of the most forward of the Praetorian cavalry. Here Prince Epiphanes¹ was wounded, doing battle valiantly for Otho.

and gain an important success.

The Othonian infantry then charged, driving the enemy's line before them, and even putting their supports to flight. For Caecina, instead of advancing his cohorts all together, had called them up one by one; this added to their disorder during the combat, as the scattered units, not being strong at any one point, were swept back by the panic of the runaways. A riot also broke out in the camp² because the men were not all called out together; they threw into chains³ Julius Gratus, Prefect⁴ of the camp, on a suspicion of treasonable correspondence with his brother Julius Fronto, who was a Tribune in Otho's army; while the Othonians had treated that same brother in the same way, and on the self-same charge. And such was the terror created between those who fled and those who were coming up to meet them—some fighting in the field, some on the entrenchments—that it was generally thought on both sides

General opinion that with greater promptness Paulinus might have

are not grown, as in France, in small separate plants like gooseberry bushes, but are trained upon trees, mainly elms, mulberries, and poplars. The vines hang in long festoons from branch to branch, or from one tree to another. The climate of that country permits of corn and other crops being grown beneath.

¹ Epiphanes was the son of Antiochus, king of Commagene (see n. on Ann. ii. 42), the wealthiest of the kings subject to Rome (chap. 81). He was in Rome at the time when the war began, and accompanied Otho on his march. Antiochus was among the first to join the cause of Vespasian (ii. 81; v. 1).

² This must have been a camp con-

structed by Caecina at or near the place called Castorum (short for *templum Castorum*), close to the field of battle. It would appear that the Othonians were marching for that camp when Caecina sent out a portion of his troops to form the ambush.

³ Such an incident, occurring apparently during the crisis of a battle, gives an idea of the extreme lengths to which insubordination might go among the armies engaged in this war.

⁴ The *praefectus castrorum*—an office created by Augustus—attended to everything connected with the making and managing of a camp. He was not subject to the *legatus legionis*; but he might have to take the place of an absent legate.

that if Suetonius Paulinus had not sounded the retreat, Caecina and his whole army might have been destroyed. Paulinus himself gave out that:—

destroyed the Vitellian army.

He was unwilling to inflict so long and toilsome a march upon his men lest they might be attacked, when exhausted, by the Vitellians issuing fresh out of their camp; once repulsed, they would have had no supports behind.

Excuse given by Paulinus.

These reasons approved themselves to the few,¹ but were adversely criticised by the multitude.

27 This reverse chastened, rather than cowed, the Vitellian soldiers: not only in the army of Caecina, who threw the blame upon his men, who were *more ready*, he said, *for mutiny than for battle*, but also in that of Fabius Valens, which by this time had reached Ticinum.² That army now abandoned its contempt for the Othonians; and being anxious to recover their lost credit, the men rendered a more constant and respectful obedience to their General. For on a previous occasion there had been an outbreak in that army, which I will now recount from the beginning, not having previously thought it well to interrupt the orderly narrative of Caecina's doings.

This* defeat helps to restore discipline in the Vitellian army.

I have already mentioned that the Batavian cohorts, which had separated from the 14th Legion during the Neronian war, were on their way back to Britain when they heard of the revolt of Vitellius;

Insolent conduct of the Batavian cohorts.

¹ Even Henderson approves of the caution of Paulinus in not pressing his final victory too far, though he condemns him no less strongly than does Tacitus for his timidity after the initial success.

² The arrival upon the scene of the army of Valens—a more powerful army than that of Caecina—wholly changed the position of affairs. Even after the tactical advantage gained by the failure of Caecina's ambush, the Othonians had been obliged to recoil from their attack

upon Caecina's army; to attempt with the same army a new offensive movement, against the combined armies of Valens and Caecina, without even awaiting the reinforcements from the armies of the Danube, was an act of madness. The only excuse that could have been made for the decision taken was that the arrival of Valens might not have been known at Bedriacum; but in chap. 32 Suetonius Paulinus states definitely that he had arrived.

whereupon they joined Fabius Valens in the country of the Lingones. These men behaved with much insolence, boasting in the several camps to which they came that they had coerced the men of the 14th Legion; that they had wrested Italy from Nero; and that the whole fortune of the war depended upon themselves. Such language was insulting to the Legion, and offensive to its commander; quarrels and brawls put an end to discipline; and at last Valens began to suspect that insolence was to end in treachery.¹

The order of Valens to send them off to Narbonese Gaul had caused an outbreak,

When therefore news arrived that the cavalry 28 of the Treveri and the Tungrian cohorts had been defeated by Otho's fleet, and that the Narbonese Province was being surrounded,² Valens ordered a detachment of Batavians to march to its assistance, not only for the sake of protecting our allies, but also with the crafty design of dispersing an insubordinate force which would be over-powerful if kept together. This order, on becoming known, roused the indignation of the Batavians, while the Legions murmured:—

Were they to be deprived of their bravest men? were those veterans, conquerors in so many wars, to be withdrawn when the enemy was within sight,³ and almost from the field of battle? If the Province were of more consequence than the city and the safety of the Empire, let the whole army march in that direction; but if everything

¹ The facts seem to be as follows. The Batavians were quartered with the 14th in Dalmatia when the war against Nero broke out. The 14th were devoted to Nero; the Batavians declared against Nero and separated from the 14th, in what exact circumstances we do not know. Their defection weakened the cause of Nero; they now boast that they had coerced the 14th into taking the same line, and thereby caused the loss of Italy to the

Neronian cause. See further i. 59 and ii. 66.

² Referring to the events recorded in chapters 14 and 15.

³ It would appear from these words that Valens had by this time already crossed the Alps. The first call for assistance from the Narbonese province he probably received while marching up the valleys of Dauphiné. If the Narbonese raid caused Valens any delay it fulfilled its main purpose.

turned upon their gaining a decisive victory in Italy,¹ why tear off, as it were, from the body its most stalwart limbs?

29 Uttering angry words like these, the men attacked Valens when he sent in his lictors to quell the disturbance, pelting him with stones and chasing him when he fled; then raising a cry that the Gallic plunder and the Viennese gold which had been won by their exertions² were concealed in the General's tent, they ransacked his baggage, and even probed the floor of his tent with their javelins and lances, while Valens himself, disguised as a slave, took refuge in a cavalry officer's quarters.

As the movement gradually quieted down, Alfenus Varus, Prefect of the camp, hit upon the wily expedient of forbidding the Centurions to go their rounds among the sentinels, and stopping the trumpet-calls which summon soldiers to their duties. This dumbfounded the men; they looked round at one another in amazement, alarmed at the very fact that there was no one to command, craving pardon by silence and submission, and at last by entreaties and by tears; and when Valens himself, so unexpectedly preserved, came forth weeping,³ and in doleful plight, they received him with joy, pity, and affection. Their feelings thus changed to gladness, with the usual passion of a multitude for extremes, they carried him

which had been quieted with much difficulty.

¹ The words *sanitas sustentaculum* as read in M are doubtless a gloss, Meiser having discovered those words in Luctatius Placidus as an explanation of *columen*. The phrase *in victoriae columen in Italia verteretur* is singularly Tacitean. *Columen* is 'a pillar': pillars don't turn; and no verb could be less suitable to go with it than *verteretur*. But Tac. affects verbs of motion (*verto, verso* and the like) as more forcible than verbs of rest; and he here seeks to combine the meanings of two inconsistent expressions, the word *columen* giving

the idea of stability, *verteretur* that of a turning-point. The phrase *verti* might properly be used with *summa* (*summa verti* Ann. v. 4), or with *discrimen* (*sed in eo discrimen verti si* Ann. xi. 28). We might translate 'If all hinged upon gaining a real victory in Italy.'

² For the extortions of Valens in Gaul see i. 66.

³ Note that the generals are as ready with their tears, when occasion requires, as the men. See n. on i. 69, 7.

off, amid plaudits and congratulations, surrounded by the eagles and the standards, to the tribunal. Valens was wise enough to ask for no man's punishment;¹ but fearing that suspicion might be raised if he affected ignorance, he named a few as guilty, knowing well that in time of civil war more is permissible to the soldiers than to the General.²

The news of Caecina's defeat arrived whilst the 30 men were entrenching their camp at Ticinum, and nearly caused a renewal of the disturbance from an idea that Valens had designedly delayed in order to keep them out of the battle. Refusing to take rest, and without waiting for the General, they hurried on the standard-bearers, or went ahead of them, and by a forced march joined Caecina. Now Valens was in ill favour with Caecina's army; they complained that he had exposed them, with their inferior numbers,³ to the whole strength of the enemy; while to excuse themselves from the reproach of defeat and cowardice they flatteringly exaggerated the strength of the newly-arrived force. The army of Valens certainly was the stronger, containing nearly double⁴ the number of legionaries and auxiliaries; but Caecina was more popular with the soldiers, not only because of his reputation for geniality, but also because his youth, strength, and commanding stature created an inane feeling⁵ in his favour.

The two
armies
effect a
junction.

¹ So said Otho after the riot which broke out at Ostia, *paucorum culpa fuit, duorum poena erit* (i. 84).

² See n. on i. 58, 11.

³ It will be remembered that the army of Caecina originally numbered only 30,000 as against the 40,000 of Valens.

⁴ This is somewhat of an exaggeration. Each general had one complete legion to start with (Valens the 5th, Caecina the 21st); Valens had detachments from the 1st, 15th, and 16th;

Caecina from the 4th and 22nd. But the addition of the 1st (*Italica*) and the *Ala Tauriana* gave Valens a considerable preponderance.

⁵ The words *inani favore* represent the Stoical view which assigned no value to mere external or personal advantages. When Tac. tells us that Corbulo attracted all eyes by his huge stature and his grandiose style of speaking, he adds *super experientiam sapientiamque etiam specie inanium validus* (Ann. xiii. 8).

Hence a rivalry between the two Generals; Caecina denounced Valens for his avarice and foul living,¹ while Valens derided Caecina as an empty-headed braggart. In pursuit, however, of their common interests they laid aside their animosity, and without thought of future pardon wrote letters full of foul charges against Otho—an example which the Othonian leaders, though abounding in material for abuse of Vitellius, refrained from following.

31 And indeed, before their respective deaths had conferred a noble fame on Otho,² and the deepest disgrace on Vitellius, men were more afraid of the furious passions of the former than of the inglorious sensuality of the latter. The murder of Galba had roused a feeling of terror and hatred against Otho; whereas no one charged Vitellius with having begun the war. Vitellius, by his greed and gluttony, disgraced himself; while Otho, with his profligacy, cruelty, and recklessness, was thought the more dangerous to the State.

The armies of Valens and Caecina having now effected a junction, the Vitellians desired to engage at once with their entire forces; while Otho held a council of war as to whether he should spin out matters, or bring his fortunes to an issue.³

¹ The combination *foedus ac maculosus* is used three times by Tac.: once in this passage of Caecina, and once of Capito (i. 7) and again in Ann. xiii. 33. In the former passage (*fuere qui crederent Capitonem ut avaritia et libidine foedum ac maculosum*) *foedus* seems to refer to his lusts and *maculosus* to his avarice. Thus *foedus* is used with *libido* of the insatiable appetite of Vitellius, *epularum foeda et inexplebilis libido* (ii. 62).

² It is interesting to note how entirely Tac.'s view of Otho's character is warped by the Stoical view of suicide. Had Otho died in any other manner

Tac. would have had nothing to say in his favour except that he had governed his province of Lusitania *comiter*, and that he had shown himself a man in marching out from Rome.

³ The narrative of Tac. suggests that Otho had been all along with the main army at Bedriacum, and that he only retired to Brixellum after battle had been decided upon. Plutarch, however, states definitely that Otho's headquarters were at Brixellum, and that he only went over to Bedriacum for the Council of War (chap. 8). This is confirmed by Suet. (Otho 9). This is also the more probable account, and it so

Otho holds
a council
of war ;

Thereupon Suetonius Paulinus, thinking that his reputation as the most skilled soldier of the time called upon him to pronounce upon the whole plan of campaign, declared that the enemy would gain by immediate action, and that delay would be of advantage to themselves :—

Suetonius
Paulinus
advises
delay.

The entire Vitellian army had arrived,¹ he said ; and there was but little force behind it. The Gallic Provinces were in a ferment ; and with so many hostile tribes ready to break in from Germany, Vitellius dare not abandon the banks of the Rhine.² The British army was kept away by enemies of its own, and by the sea ; Spain was almost bare of troops ; a naval raid and a single reverse had shaken the Narbonese Province. Transpadane Italy was hemmed in by the Alps, and could get no help by sea ; it had been devastated by the mere passage of the enemy's army ; there was no corn anywhere for them, and how could an army be kept together without supplies ? The Germans, who formed the most

far relieves Otho from the charge of cowardice in leaving his army just before the battle. There is some force in the point made by Henderson that Brixellum, on the main approach to Rome, and confronting the Vitellian force at Cremona, was a suitable position for the commander-in-chief of the Roman armies had that commander really been the strategist which Henderson supposes him to have been. But all depended upon Otho's means of acquiring information of the enemy's movements, as well as of those of his own armies. Had he been at the end of a telegraph or telephone wire, Brixellum would have been an admirable position for a commander-in-chief ; but to presume from such a distance to issue peremptory orders to engage, as Otho did, was to sacrifice everything to chance. All the information he had pointed in the direction of delay. See following chapters.

¹ Thus at the time when this consultation took place, the Othonian

generals knew that Valens and Caecina had joined forces. This is a most important point. The offensive movement against the Vitellian army might have been justified, after the recent success at *Locus Castorum* (or *Ad Castoris*) if Caecina's army had remained unsupported ; but it became an act of folly when the two armies were united.

² The Othonians were evidently ignorant of the fact that still a third army was marching upon Italy under the command of Vitellius himself. They supposed that Vitellius had sent his last available man to the front, and that such troops as remained behind were needed to guard the provinces. And so they were : the revolt of Civilis is enough to show how reckless Vitellius was of the larger interests of the Empire. As a matter of fact, Vitellius brought with him fresh Gallic levies and 8000 men from the army of Britain ; but he did not arrive before the month of May.

formidable part of the hostile forces, would ill endure the change of country and of climate: they would waste away if the war were prolonged into the summer. Many a force that was irresistible at first,¹ had lost all its strength through inaction and delay. Their own resources, on the other hand, were abundant; they could count upon² Pannonia, Moesia, Dalmatia, and the East, with their entire armies; they had Italy and the City, which was the head of the Empire; they had the Senate and People of Rome—names that might sometimes be overshadowed, but which never lost their splendour. They had wealth, public and private; they had untold money—a weapon more powerful than the sword in civil war. Their soldiers were used to Italy, or to still warmer climes; they had the barrier of the Po,³ with cities protected by garrisons and by walls: the defence of Placentia had shown that not one of them would surrender to the enemy. He gave his voice therefore for delay. Within a few days the famous 14th Legion⁴ would arrive with all the forces of Moesia; after that let them take counsel again, and should they then decide on battle, they would fight with augmented forces.⁵

¹ The meaning of *impetu valida* is not free from doubt. The word *impetus* is often used in the sense of 'attack': so that the meaning might be 'strong in striking power'; 'strong for offensive purposes.' In that case, however, we should have expected *arma* or *exercitus* as a subject, rather than *bella*: and the antithesis with *mora* (cp. *scelera impetu, bona consilia mora valescere* i. 32) rather suggests the meaning that a war impetuously and holdly begun may fizzle out under a policy of delay.

² Here the word *fida* is ambiguous. Being joined with *opulenta* (*omnia opulenta et fida*) it may have the natural meaning 'supplies at once abundant and secure': 'supplies on which they could count'; but the words which

follow (*Pannoniam, Moesiam*, etc.) suggest that the reference is rather to the loyalty of those armies.

³ The words *obiacere flumen Padum* do not apply to the actual position of the Othonian army on the N. bank; nor do they imply that Suetonius was proposing to withdraw his army to the S. bank of the river. They refer to the broad strategic fact that the Othonian army was holding the line of the Po as a whole against the invaders.

⁴ The famous 14th was coming from Dalmatia (see chap. 27 n.); apparently without auxiliaries, as the Batavians had parted company with them.

⁵ What with his preconceived view that Tac. is blind, and not to be depended upon in military matters,

He is supported by Celsus and Gallus, but Otho and his creatures are for immediate battle.

In this view Marius Celsus concurred, as also 33
 Annii Gallus; the latter was suffering from a recent fall from his horse, but his opinion was reported by messengers sent to ask for it. Otho himself was for instant battle; and his brother Titianus, and Proculus, Prefect of the Praetorian Cohorts, with an impatience bred of ignorance, stopped all opposition by resorting to flattery, protesting that Fortune, the Gods, and the genius of Otho himself were with them, and would prosper their undertaking.

Otho retires to Brixellum.

Battle once determined upon, they consulted as to whether it would be better for Otho to be present in person or to keep away from it. The same evil counsellors insisted that he should retire to Brixellum,¹ where without being exposed to danger he might reserve himself for the supreme direction of the campaign and Empire.² To this Paulinus and Celsus offered no objection, not wishing to appear to be exposing the Emperor to danger.

That day gave the first fatal blow³ to Otho's

and his own persuasion as to how the campaign ought to have been fought, Henderson scarcely does justice to what Suetonius Paulinus actually said. 'Let them wait till the summer came,' is how he paraphrases that general's advice. He takes no notice of the alternative suggested by Suetonius in the closing words of his speech: 'Let them in any case wait for the arrival of the legions now hastening to their assistance, and if they then determine to fight, fight with their entire forces.' It seems to me impossible to deny that these were the words of wisdom. I greatly regret not being able to adopt the view of the Bedriacum campaign put forward in so interesting a way, and with so much military knowledge, by Mr. Henderson. But his arguments do not convince me: and I cannot accept the view that Suetonius produced nothing better than 'a series of plausible arguments for

leaving well alone'; and that he was properly overridden by the brilliant strategic idea proceeding from the brain of Otho. That brilliant idea ended, as it only could end, in disaster. See the question further discussed in the Appendix.

¹ According to Plut. Otho remained all this time at Brixellum, and never came to Bedriacum at all (Otho 5).

² *Summa rerum et imperii* is a hendiadys, meaning 'the supreme command'; for less important positions the phrase *summa rerum* can suffice (iv. 25).

³ A good instance of the manner in which Tac. sometimes piles on his meaning at the expense of his logic, seeking to combine in a single sentence the force of two different ideas: 'that day first gave the death-blow to the party of Otho' (Messrs. Church and Brodribb).

fortunes. For not only did he carry off with him a strong force, consisting of Praetorian infantry, cavalry, and guards, thus taking the heart out of those left behind, who had no confidence in their Generals; but also, being the one man who possessed the confidence of the soldiers, just as he himself trusted none but them, he left no certain instructions as to the respective authority of his Generals.¹

34 All this was known to the Vitellians, for deserters abounded, as usual in civil war, and the scouts, in their eagerness to discover the enemy's plans, divulged their own. Caecina and Valens, finding a substitute for wise counsels in the folly of the enemy,² waited quietly and watchfully while he rushed blindly to destruction; and to keep their own soldiers from wasting their time in idleness,³ made

The Vitellian leaders make a feint of crossing the Po, and build a bridge.

¹ The account given by Plutarch (Otho 8, 9) of the Council of War, and of the reasons given on each side, is practically identical with that of Tacitus. The main reasons given by Plutarch for the decision arrived at are, that the Praetorians, ignorant of war, self-confident, and anticipating an easy victory, wished to rush things at once, so as to get back to the pleasures of the city; and that Otho himself, unable to endure the suspense of his present situation, was impatient to bring matters to a decision. This last reason corresponds exactly with the state of nervous tension which Tac. ascribes to Otho in chap. 23 (*humillimo cuique credulus bonos metuens trepidabat*). Plut. puts the case thus:—¹ But apparently not even Otho himself could bear up any longer against the uncertainty, nor, owing to his inexperience in such matters and his effeminate nature, endure any rational consideration of the dangers; but, tortured by his anxieties, he seems to have hurried on with his eyes shut, like a man on a precipice, eager to entrust his fortunes to the first chance' (Otho chap. 9, Mr. Hardy's translation). And if anything were wanting to complete the folly of Otho's decision, it was furnished by his depriving his army, at the critical

moment, of the inspiration of his presence—the only inspiration which appealed to them—and by his carrying off with him from his already too weak army a substantial portion of its strength.

² A remark showing true military observation. In his life of Stonewall Jackson, Col. Henderson points out that one of the great merits of that general was the readiness with which, even when he had made mistakes himself, he could turn to advantage the still greater mistakes of the enemy.

³ It is hard to believe that the building of the bridge over the Po, and the determined efforts made to reach its southern bank, were only a feint undertaken with no more serious object than that assigned to it by Tacitus of keeping the men employed: *ne ipsorum miles segne otium tereret*. Whether the Vitellians were definitely pursuing 'a strategy of penetration,' in the sense attributed to them by Henderson, may perhaps be doubted; but as Caecina's first movement had been to cross the Po and seize Placentia with a view to securing the main highway to Rome, it seems natural to suppose that, having been foiled in that attempt, he would seize the first opportunity of crossing the river and so marching

a feint of crossing the Po by beginning to build a bridge in face of the gladiators on the other bank. A number of boats, fastened together by strong planks on each side,¹ were placed at equal distances from each other, with their bows up stream; to keep the whole firmly in position, anchors were thrown out on the up side, the cables not being hauled taut, in order that as the river rose the boats might rise also without any disturbance of their order. The bridge ended in a high tower erected upon the furthest-out boat, and fitted with engines and machines for driving off the enemy. The Othonians also had built a tower on the bank, from which they discharged stones and firebrands.

Battle in the middle of the river between the gladiators and the Batavians.

In the middle of the river was an island² which the gladiators were toiling to reach in boats; but the Germans, swimming across, reached it first.³ When a number of them had got over, Macer manned some Liburnian galleys with his best gladiators to attack them. But gladiators have not the steadiness of regular troops in battle; nor could they aim⁴ as

straight for the capital. Cremona gave the Vitellians the base they required; and the fact that Otho called up Spurrina and most of his garrison from Placentia, and appointed a new commander to supersede Macer and his gladiators at the place where the bridge was being built, seems to show that he suspected that a crossing might be made at that point. Such an expectation affords the only excuse possible for Otho's retirement to Brixellum on the eve of the great battle.

¹ The commentators here are very far out. Heraeus strangely explains *utrimque* as meaning 'et a prora et a puppi'; and Spooner translates 'at either end,' i.e. 'at bow and stern.' But this is manifestly wrong. This bridge, like every bridge of boats, was made by fastening a number of vessels together side by side with their heads up stream. The roadway across was

made by laying planks from the side of one vessel to that of its neighbour, till the whole river was spanned. There could be no object in connecting bow and stern with planks: what would they be connected with? Anchors would be thrown out from the bows to keep the vessels in their place, and doubtless also from the stern to keep them steady. But the planks were laid from side to side to form the passage across the whole.

² Heraeus identifies this island with one below the junction of the Adda with the Po, opposite the modern village of Spinadesco.

³ Halm reads *perlabeledantur*: but M has *prelabeledantur*, which gives the better sense that the Batavians (as they actually did) reached the island first.

⁴ The Tacitean phrase *vulnera derigebant* does not admit of literal translation. A similar confusion—

certainly from swaying decks as those who were fighting from firm ground upon the bank. And when rowers and combatants, inclining now this way and now that in their terror, got mixed up confusedly together, the Germans leapt boldly into the water, and clutching hold of the vessels, either boarded them by the gangways, or sank them with their hands.

These things, happening before the eyes of the two armies, greatly delighted the Vitellians; while the Othonians, with no less vehemence, cursed the cause and author of the disaster.

36 The battle ended in a flight, the Othonians hauling off with them such vessels as survived. The men shouted for Macer's death: he was already wounded by a lance thrown at him from a distance, and was being attacked with drawn swords when the Tribunes and Centurions intervened for his protection. Shortly afterwards, by Otho's orders, Vestricius Spurinna came up with a reinforcement of auxiliaries, leaving a slender garrison in Placentia; and Otho sent Flavius Sabinus,¹ Consul Designate, to command the force that had been under Macer.² The soldiers were well pleased at the change of Generals; but the Generals themselves took no pleasure in a service so harassed by continual insubordination.

Reverse of the Othonians; indignation against Macer;

he is replaced by Flavius Sabinus.

37 I find it stated by some writers³ that the two

Some writers say

rather duplication—of idea occurs in chap. 22: *cum acrius e moenibus vulnerarentur*, where *acrius* refers to the woublers, and *vulnerarentur* to the wounded.

¹ This Flavius Sabinus is not to be confounded with Vespasian's elder brother of the same name who was Prefect of the city. See n. on i. 77.

² Thus Macer, who had proved himself an active intelligent officer, and had achieved a considerable success, is at

once superseded in obedience to an ignorant outcry by the men. Otho shared all his men's suspicions of the senatorial generals: no man ever with more fatal results to himself 'swopped horses while crossing the stream.'

³ The substance of this chapter is given by Plutarch as well as by Tac., and in language so similar to his that it is evident that both drew from the same source. Tac. says he found the story *apud quosdam auctores*; Plutarch

that the two
armies had
thoughts of
coming to
an agree-
ment ;

armies, either from dread of war, or in disgust at the chiefs on either side, whose shameful doings were becoming more notorious every day, had thoughts of putting an end to the conflict, either by coming to an agreement among themselves, or by leaving the choice of an Emperor to the Senate ; and that it was with that object that the Othonian generals advocated a policy of delay, Paulinus especially entertaining hopes for himself as being the senior Consular, and as having won military name and fame in the British wars.

but the
circum-
stances
made any
such pro-
posal im-
possible.

Some few persons, I grant, may in their hearts have desired peace rather than strife, and have wished for an excellent and blameless Prince instead of the most worthless and most debauched of mankind ; but I cannot believe that a sagacious man like Paulinus could have hoped, in that most corrupt age, for such moderation in the multitude, or expected that men who had taken up arms from love of war should now lay them down from a love of peace ; nor yet either that two armies, differing in speech and manners, could have come to any such agreement, or that Legates and Generals who were for the most part conscious of their own profligacy,¹ neediness, and crimes, would have submitted to any Emperor who

introduces it in much the same way by, *ἐτέρων δὲ ἢ ἀκούειν*. Who the authorities were, we know not : Otho's secretary, '*rhetor Secundus*,' possibly identical with Julius Secundus, one of the interlocutors in the *Dialogue* (see Mr. Hardy on Plut. Otho 9), can hardly have been one. Plutarch is inclined to think there was some truth in the story ; Tacitus, with a juster grasp of the state of feeling and of parties, rejects it as improbable. Plutarch thinks that some idea of a compromise sprung from men's recollection of the horrors of previous civil wars ; Tac., after his wont, im-

proves the occasion, and reviewing those wars in a philosophical spirit, shows how the mad ambitions of great leaders, coupled with the wrath of the gods, first destroyed liberty, and then established despotism in its place.

¹ The word *luxus*, as we have seen, is used by Tac. with two distinct meanings. Sometimes it stands for profligacy of every kind ; sometimes merely for luxurious and extravagant living. The latter meaning is the more appropriate here, and answers to the word *τενφῆ* used by Plutarch in the corresponding passage. See n. on i. 13.

was not himself depraved, and bound down to them by the services they had rendered him.¹

38 Love of power is an ancient, and indeed inborn, passion of the human mind; it broke forth in full development with the greatness of our Empire. In our humble days, equality was easily maintained; but when the whole world had been subdued, and the destruction of rival kings and cities opened up to men's desires the secure possession of wealth, then first blazed forth the contests between Patricians and Plebeians. At one time Tribunes were turbulent, at another Consuls overbearing; there were foretastes of civil war in the city and in the Forum. Then Gaius Marius, from the lowest of the plebs, and Lucius Sulla, most pitiless of nobles, vanquished liberty by force of arms, and established tyranny in her place. After them came Pompey,² a more masked, but not a better, master; and thereafter no prize was fought for but that of Empire.³ Legions composed of Roman citizens did not lay down their arms at Pharsalia and Philippi: much less would the armies of

Love of power is an ineradicable quality of the human mind;

it has been the cause of all our political troubles and revolutions.

¹ Tac. is doubtless sound in his judgment on this matter. The war was one between the armies, not merely between their leaders; and the passions of both armies had become so excited that no leader on either side could have extinguished them. Things had come to such a pass that the question at issue between them had to be fought out to the end.

That Suetonius had any such ambition as is suggested above is most improbable; and he had no following to make it practicable.

² In Ann. iii. 27-28 (see n. below) the two Gracchi, Saturninus, and Drusus are specially mentioned as pestilent agitators; Marius is not named; Sulla comes in for a meed of praise in having for a time stopped the evil of excessive legislation. Pompey is treated with as little respect as in the present passage: *gravior remediis quam delicta erant,*

suarumque legum auctor idem ac subversor.

³ A comparison of chaps. 37 and 38 with the corresponding passage in Plutarch (Otho 9) shows in a conclusive manner that Tac. and Plut. drew from the same sources; and also illustrates the manner in which Tac. thought himself free to deal with his materials. Both authors conjecture similarly as to the opinion held of Otho and Vitellius by their soldiers (see chap. 37); both refer in almost identical terms to the calamitous results of the civil wars of Marius, Sulla, Pompey and Caesar. But whereas Plut. attributes this reflection to the soldiers, Tac. separates the second point from its connexion with the first, and introduces it as a reflection of his own into the disquisition on the lust of power which occupies chap. 38. Tac. uses the same material, but uses it in his own way and for his own purpose.

Otho and Vitellius have abandoned war of their own free will. The same divine wrath,¹ the same human frenzy, the same criminal aims, were driving them on to strife; and that these wars were ended as it were at a single stroke, was due to the incapacity of the leaders.²

But enough of these reflections on ancient and modern times: I resume the order of my narrative.

After the departure of Otho for Brixellum, the 39
command lay nominally in the hands of his brother Titianus; but all real authority was exercised by the Prefect Proculus. Celsus and Paulinus enjoyed the empty title of General; but as their counsels were disregarded, their names only served to screen the blunders of the rest. The Tribunes and Centurions

Want of
concert
among the
Othonian
generals.

¹ 'The divine wrath' or 'wrath of the Gods' is not unfrequently appealed to by Tac. as the cause of untoward or calamitous events. In the present passage, and some others, the phrase seems used in all seriousness as expressing his own deliberate convictions. Thus in Ann. iv. 1, Sejanus acquired an ascendancy over Tiberius *non tam sollertia . . . quam deum ira in rem Romanam*; and in Ann. xvi. 16, the real cause of all the judicial murders and the suicides under Nero is thus given: *ira illa numinum in res Romanas fuit*. In other passages Tac. uses the phrase in a more or less conventional and half ironical meaning, as when the populace attribute the heavy rains after the death of Britannicus to the 'wrath of the Gods' (Ann. xiii. 17); or when he tells us how the ignorant soldiers regarded the drought as a portent *quod in pace fors seu natura, tunc fatum et ira dei vocabatur* (Hist. iv. 26). So in Ann. i. 30; xiv. 22; Hist. iv. 54 and elsewhere.

² The rapid review of Roman history contained in this chapter, in which Tacitus attributes all the political troubles of the late Republic, and the loss of liberty in which they ended, to an inordinate desire for wealth, should be compared with the similar but more elaborate review of Roman history

given in Ann. iii. 26-28. In that passage, starting with a discourse upon the origin of law, Tac. shows how in Rome the legislative powers of the people were gradually corrupted and misused by the spirit of faction, and the ambitions of leaders, until at last, as his famous epigram puts it, *corruptissima re publica plurimae leges*. He then proceeds, as in the present passage, to show how violence and anarchy led inevitably to the loss of liberty (*i.e.* of the Republic), until at last Augustus established 'Peace with Empire.' It will be noted that in the present passage less is said of the political side of ambition, and that lust for money—*securas opes concupiscere*—is put down as the one cause of the troubles which afflicted the Republic. But in general spirit the two passages are in perfect harmony. The use of *principatus* here is to be noted: it is strictly correct that Caesar and Pompey fought for 'the First Place,' which is the natural meaning of *principatus*. But that word was not known in a technical sense till Augustus adopted the title *Princeps*, or 'First Citizen,' as that by which he wished to be called (*cuncta discordiis civilibus fessa nomine principis sub imperium accepit*, Ann. i. 1). Yet the title did not appear in formal documents.

were disconcerted to see the worst men in authority, their betters naught accounted of; the soldiers were full of ardour, though they preferred to criticise, rather than obey, their orders. It was resolved to advance the camp to the 4th milestone from Bedriacum; but so unskilfully was this done, that although it was spring-time, with streams abounding in the neighbourhood, the men suffered from want of water.¹

They march to the 4th milestone from Bedriacum; the camp ill-placed.

Here the question of giving battle was discussed. Otho wrote pressing for instant action. The soldiers demanded that the Emperor should be present at the battle: many also that the troops quartered on the other side of the Po should be brought up.² To pronounce what would have been the best thing to do is not so easy as to affirm that what was done was the worst possible.

Otho urges instant action.

40 Setting forth as if for a campaign, rather than for a battle,³ they made for the confluence of the Adua

His army marches to within four

¹ Henderson's theory of a flank march to the mouth of the Adda (see n. on next chap.) requires him to change arbitrarily the *quartum* of Tac. into *quartum decimum*; and he supports this reading by the necessity of giving Otho's army a march long enough to acquire a thirst: 'the statement of Tacitus is, of course, mere nonsense if the march were only four miles.' Plutarch gives the distance as six miles, which so far confirms the statement of Tac. as against the fourteen proposed by Henderson. But Tac. is evidently speaking of the want of skill shown in choosing the spot for encampment. A supply of water, both for men and animals, for various purposes, is an absolute necessity for an army encamping for a night, after however short a march. A four-mile march under a Lombardy sun might make any man thirsty: but, as a matter of fact, Tac. says nothing about thirst. What he says is that the site of the camp was so badly chosen that the army suffered from want of water (*penuria aquae fatigaretur*). It may be remembered how during recent manoeuvres some of

our own officers were severely criticised for having chosen for a portion of the force for one night a spot with no supply of water close at hand.

² The soldiers themselves felt that the army had been fatally weakened by the withdrawal of part of the forces with Otho.

³ These words mean that the army set out not in pure fighting trim, with a view to immediate combat, but with such an amount of camp equipment, etc. as would be needed for operations extending over several days. They encamped the first night after a march of four miles—Plutarch, more accurately, makes it six miles—and it is clear from what follows that the generals contemplated encamping for at least a second night, as they feared that the enemy might attack them 'either when *incompositos in agmine*,' or 'when in the act of entrenching their camp.' Henderson finds in the words *non ut ad pugnam sed ad bellandum profecti* a support to his theory of a flank march to the Adda (see n. on next chap.). He thinks they show that the army had no intention of fighting

miles of
Cremona.

with the Po—a distance of 16 miles.¹ Celsus and Paulinus protested against exposing the army after a fatiguing march, and weighed down with baggage, to an enemy in light order who, having scarce four miles to go, would not fail to set upon them either when marching in disorder, or when dispersed and working at their defences. Overcome in argument, Titianus and Proculus fell back upon their authority as commanders;² and indeed a Numidian dispatch-rider had arrived with peremptory orders from Otho, who being sick at the delay and unable to endure the suspense,

so soon as they did; and that it was setting out for some more distant object than Cremona. But naturally, having sixteen miles to march, they did not start in battle order, and probably did not intend to fight on that day. The words are no doubt introduced as a censure on the careless manner of the march, which left them at a disadvantage when attacked, just in the manner that Suetonius Paulinus had foretold.

¹ The words *confluentis Padi et Aduae fluminum sedecim inde* (i.e. from the first night's camping ground) *miliuum spatio distantis petebant* cannot be reconciled with the narrative of Tac. or with the actual distances as carefully given both by him and by Plutarch. Henderson takes a bold course, reading *Addae* for *Aduae*, and supports it by arguments founded on modern strategic principles.

(1) As the confluence of the Adda and the Po is seven miles to the west of Cremona, he changes the *quartum* of Tacitus (chap. 39 line 7) into *quartum decimum*, so as to bring the Othonians, after their first day's march, within the necessary sixteen miles of 'the confluence'; and (2) he attributes to Otho and his advisers the daring idea of making a flank march round Cremona, so as to establish the Othonian army in the rear of that city, while the reinforcements expected from the Danube were to come up simultaneously to Bedriacum, and so close in upon Cremona from the east. This view, which will be found discussed in an Appendix, I am unable to accept: and I content myself with explaining the

narrative of Tac. as it stands.

The introduction of the river Adda is obviously a mistake; it may be a mistake in Tac.'s geography; or it may be a mistake in the reading. Hardy has made the very probable suggestion that the true reading for the *Aduae* of M is *Adrae*—the Adra being a stream flowing into the Po on its S. bank nearly opposite to Cremona. It may be objected that the words used are more applicable to a confluence formed by a river flowing from the N. bank; but it is clear that Tac. meant that the Othonian objective was some point on the bank of the river, distant sixteen miles from their first night's camp, and four miles distant from Cremona. At this spot it was intended to encamp, no doubt with a view to co-operation with the troops on the S. side of the river (see n. on next chap.); but just as Paulinus and Celsus feared, they were attacked before they reached their camping ground, before even they had begun the deflexion from the Postumian Road which had to be made to reach it. The account of Plutarch agrees almost entirely with the above explanation with the exception of his giving six miles instead of four as the distance marched upon the first day.

² If this statement be true—that Celsus and Paulinus, before the march began, remonstrated against the plan proposed on the ground that they would have to engage an enemy who would have only four miles to march—it is enough to disprove the idea that they had any expectation of making a flank march round Cremona.

rebuked the Generals for their inaction and ordered them to engage at once.

41 Upon the same day, while Caecina was engaged on the work of the bridge,¹ two Praetorian Tribunes arrived and demanded an interview; and he was preparing to hear and reply to their proposals when some scouts, coming up in hot haste, announced that the enemy were at hand. Thus the colloquy with the Tribunes was broken off, and it remained uncertain whether they had come with some trick or treachery in view, or to make an honourable proposal. Having dismissed the Tribunes, Caecina rode back to the camp to find that Fabius Valens had given the signal for battle, and that the soldiers were under arms.² While the Legions were casting lots for their stations, the cavalry dashed out; and strange to say, though encountered by a smaller number of Othonians, they would have been driven back into their own entrenchments but for the valour of the Italian Legion, which with drawn swords compelled the beaten horsemen to return and renew the fight.

Incident at the bridge over the Po.

Valens orders an attack; the battle begins with a cavalry skirmish.

The Vitellian Legions were formed up without confusion, thick brushwood keeping their array out of sight of the enemy though he was close at hand. But on the Othonian side, the leaders were

How the two armies were formed up; confusion on the Othonian side.

¹ That Caecina was thus engaged upon the bridge at the very time that a forward move from Bedriacum was to be expected, makes it certain that Tac. was wrong in stating (chap. 34) that its construction was undertaken merely to keep his men employed. There can be little doubt that it was being built with a view to a direct march upon Rome, or at least to an attack upon the Othonian force on the S. side of the Po. And the fact that the overtures from that force were made on the very same

day (*eodem die*) that the main Othonian army was marching to a point near the bridge, points to co-operation between the two forces, and supports the first of the alternatives given below in chap. 41, viz., that the tribunes were designing to play some trick (*insidiae*) upon Caecina.

² It is evident that the site of the bridge was not far distant from the Vitellian camp, and from the scene of the battle that followed.

half-hearted; the men were exasperated with their Generals; waggons and camp-followers were mixed up together; and the road, with deep ditches on either side, was scarce wide enough even for an army marching unopposed. Some gathered round their standards, others were looking for them: everywhere a confused din of men running up and shouting: some rushing to the front, some slinking to the rear, according as courage or cowardice prompted them.

False report that the Vitellian army had revolted.

The minds thus suddenly panic-stricken were 42 lulled into a false security by a report that the army of Vitellius had turned against him. Whether this rumour was spread by the Vitellian scouts, or originated on Otho's side—whether it was started designedly or by chance—was never known. The Othonians, relinquishing their ardour for battle, volunteered a salute; but the hostile cries with which it was received, the general ignorance on their own side as to why it had been offered, raised an alarm of treachery. At that moment the enemy's line bore down upon them, superior in strength and numbers, and with its ranks unbroken; the Othonians, though scattered, outnumbered, and fatigued, took up the fight with spirit. Cumbered as the ground was with trees and vineyards, the battle assumed divers forms: some fought at close quarters, some from a distance; some charged in companies, some in column.¹ On the causeway² there was a close-locked struggle of

The Othonians fight bravely and stubbornly, but are at last defeated.

¹ The word *cuneus*, properly 'a wedge,' is used of any formation in the shape of a column. The word *catervae*, here translated 'companies,' does not refer to any well-defined unit, such as a century or a maniple, but to any group or knot of men who in the general disorder happened to find themselves together.

² The *agger viae* is the raised causeway forming the centre of the Postumian Road, the combatants on which would be raised above, and conspicuous to, the troops on either side. Thus the battle took place, as the battle at *ad Castorum* had done, on the high road itself, before the Othonian army had begun to deflect from it. According

man against man, and shield against shield; giving up the discharge of their heavy javelins, the men broke through helmets and breastplates with sword or battle-axe: each recognising the other, and conspicuous to the rest, they fought as though the whole issue were in their hands.

43 On the open plain between the river and the road,¹ two Legions chanced to meet: the 21st, known by the name of *Rapax*, a Legion of high and ancient distinction, on the Vitellian side; on the Othonian side, the 1st *Adiutrix*, a Legion which had never been in battle before, but was full of spirit, and keen to vindicate its newly-won honours. The 1st beat down the front ranks of the 21st, and carried off their eagle; the 21st, stung to madness, drove back the 1st, killing their Legate Orfidius Benignus, and carrying off a number of their standards.

Various incidents of the battle.

In another part of the field, the 13th Legion² was driven back by a charge of the 5th; and the 14th was surrounded by superior numbers. By this time the Othonian leaders had fled, and Caecina and Valens were bringing up their reserves, when up came a fresh reinforcement, consisting of Batavians³ under Varus Alfenus, who, having routed a band

to Henderson's theory, the army was to leave the main road and strike to the N. in such a manner as to give a wide berth to Cremona.

¹ These words show that the battle was fought near the Po; as is also shown by the promptness with which the Batavians were able to appear upon the scene of conflict after defeating the Othonian gladiators.

² The 13th legion (*Gemina*) was the only complete legion which had come from Pannonia in time to join the Othonians before the battle. Of the 14th (*Gemina Martia Victrix*) only a detachment, 2000 strong, had as yet come up from Dalmatia.

³ The Latin here is very awkward, as

Tac. first uses *Batavis* in the Abl., and in the same sentence speaks of them in the Nom. as *obpositae cohortes*. It is to be noted that whereas he always speaks of the Batavian 'cohorts' (i. 59; ii. 66, 69; iv. 19), thereby indicating that they were infantry, Plut., in narrating this incident, describes them as *Γερμανῶν ἰρμεῖς ἄριστοι*. Tac. also elsewhere speaks of their *patrius nandi usus quo simul segue et arma et equos regunt* (Agric. 18); and again of their *delectus eques praecipuo nandi studio arma equosque retinens* (iv. 12). Hardy concludes that they must have formed *cohortes equitatae*, containing some cavalry as well as infantry (see his n. on Plut. Otho 12).

of gladiators which had crossed in boats,¹ and cut them to pieces on the river itself, now threw themselves, flushed with victory, upon the enemy's flank.

Flight of
the Otho-
nians to
Bedriacum.

Their centre broken, the Othonians fled confusedly for Bedriacum. For the whole of that immense distance the roads were blocked with dead bodies, the slaughter being all the greater that in civil war no plunder can be made out of captives.² Suetonius Paulinus and Licinius Proculus avoided the camp by different routes; but Vedius Aquila, Legate of the 13th Legion, was ill-advised enough in his terror to expose himself to the fury of the soldiers. Entering the camp in broad daylight, he was received with howls, with insults, and even blows, by his mutinous and fugitive soldiers. They had no particular charge against him; but they reviled him as a deserter and a traitor, after the manner of a multitude, in which every man fastens his own delinquencies upon others.³ Titianus and Celsus were saved by the darkness, as by that time the guards had been set and the soldiers quieted by Annius Gallus, who by argument, entreaty, and authority, had turned the soldiers from aggravating the disaster of defeat by the slaughter of their own comrades: ⁴—

Vedius
Aquila ill-
treated by
the men;

Annius
Gallus
pacifies
them.

¹ This attempt of the gladiators to cross the Po, at the very time of the battle, seems to have been a pre-concerted movement for the purpose of effecting a junction with the main Othonian army. If so, that would negative the idea that the Othonian generals were meditating a flank march round the N. side of Cremona.

² This grim statement is confirmed by Plut. The account of the battle given by him (Otho 11-14) agrees in all essential respects with that given by Tac. He tells us that he travelled over the battle-field at a later time in company with a senator, Mestrius Florus, and that Mestrius told him

that he had seen the dead piled as high as the pediments of an ancient temple which he pointed out to him. Dio gives the total number that fell on both sides in the battles before Cremona at 40,000 (lxiv. 10). But all such statements made by ancient authors—as by mediaeval authors—as to numbers slain in battles are to be received with caution. Tac. shows singular prudence in abstaining from giving precise numbers.

³ We are left to infer that Vedius was killed.

⁴ Gallus seems not to have sufficiently recovered from his accident to leave the camp (chap. 33).

Whether the war were ended now, or they should prefer to renew the conflict, the sole alleviation of their defeat would be to remain united.

The spirit of the other troops was broken; but the Praetorians protested that they had not been defeated but betrayed: 1—

The Praetorians protest that they have been betrayed.

Even the Vitellians, they declared, had gained no bloodless victory; their cavalry had been repulsed; one of their Legions had lost an eagle. There was still the force with Otho himself, on the other side of the Po; the Moesian Legions were on their way; a large part of their army had remained at Bedriacum. Those forces at any rate were still undefeated, and if need were, they would die with glory on the field.

Swaying thus between terror and ferocity, it was to fury rather than to fear that they were goaded in the extremity of their despair.

45 The Vitellian army halted at the 5th milestone from Bedriacum, the Generals not venturing to assault the enemy's camp² on the same day. They hoped also for a voluntary surrender; for having come forth in light order ready only for battle, they had to look to their arms and to their victory to be their rampart. The day following revealed the temper of the Othonian army; even those who had been fiercest were now ready to give in, and an embassy was sent out. The Vitellian leaders, without hesitation,

Next day the Othonians surrender;

¹ Plut. says that the Praetorians behaved with the greatest cowardice, not awaiting the enemy's onset, and throwing all into confusion. It is not usually the bravest men who are first to raise the cry of treachery. It appears that the *media acies* which first gave way (above, line 1) was formed of Praetorians.

This sentence, lines 16 to 18 (*ceteris fractus—victum fremebat*), seems to be out of place where it stands. The

words are in the oratio recta, and cannot therefore be part of the speech into which they have been inserted; and their relevance is not apparent.

² Some comm. suppose that the camp here mentioned was the one occupied on the previous night, at the 4th milestone from Bedriacum; but the narrative which follows mentions only one camp, and that the camp at Bedriacum.

pathetic
scenes in
the camp.

granted a peace. Some misgiving was caused by a short detention of the envoys before it was known that the petition had been granted ;¹ but as soon as they returned, the gates were thrown open, conquered and conquerors alike burst into tears, and with a sad joyfulness deplored the fatalities of civil war. Some found wounded brothers, others kinsmen, to tend in the same tents.² The hopes, the prizes, were all uncertain, the sorrow and the deaths were there : nor was there any man so fortunate as not to have some one to lament. The body of the Legate Orfidius was searched for and burnt with the customary honours ; a few were buried by their relatives ; the common herd were left lying on the ground.

Otho re-
ceives the
news
calmly.

Otho was awaiting news of the battle without 46
fear, and with a mind resolved. First came a bad report ; then fugitives from the field announced that all was lost. The soldiers, in their ardour, without waiting for the Emperor to speak, bade him, *Be of good heart ; he had fresh forces still ; they themselves would bear and dare everything.*

The
soldiers
urge him
not to lose
heart.

These were no words of flattery ; in a frenzy of passionate loyalty they were burning to go forth to fight and restore the fortunes of the cause. Those behind stretched out their hands ; those in front clutched Otho by the knees ; foremost of all was Plotius Firmus, the Praetorian Prefect, who implored him, *Not to abandon his faithful army, and the soldiers who had served him so well ; it was more courageous to endure calamity than to run away from it. The brave*

¹ Plut. says that for a moment Titianus induced his army to man the walls again.

² What Tac. means to imply no

doubt is that men from both armies were tended in the same tents ; but by his mode of statement he leaves the point ambiguous.

and the strenuous clung to hope even in adverse fortune ; it was the weaklings and the cowards whose fears hurried them to despair.

As Otho's face relented or hardened in response to these appeals, the soldiers cheered or moaned ; nor was it only Otho's own Praetorians that felt thus. The men sent on in advance from Moesia told him that the approaching army was no less determined, and that the Legions had now reached Aquileia ; nor can any one doubt that at that time a desperate and deadly war might have been rekindled, uncertain alike for victors and for vanquished.¹

47 But Otho himself would not hear of war :—

*'To expose this spirit, this valour of yours,' he said, 'to further peril, would be to place too high a value upon my life. The greater the hopes you hold out to me should I choose to live, the nobler will be my death.'*² *We have had trial of each other, I and Fortune.*³ *Count not the length of my reign ; it is hard to show moderation in good fortune when you think that it will not long be yours.*⁴ *It was Vitellius who began the war ;*⁵ *it was he who made us fight for Empire : it shall be mine to show that we are to fight for it but once. Let posterity judge of me thereby.*

Otho refuses to accept their devotion,

¹ As further resistance on the part of the Othonians was manifestly impossible after the surrender of Otho's main army at Bedriacum, Mommsen suggests that Tac., in order to heighten the tragic effect of Otho's speech and resolution, has left it to be inferred that his decision was taken before he knew of the final surrender. The point is a negative one ; but no doubt the rhetorical effect of the situation and the speech is heightened by the opinion pronounced by Tac. that Otho had still at his disposal the means of carrying on the war.

² However hopeless further resistance may have been, all our authorities agree that Otho's soldiers implored him

to carry on the war.

³ The meaning seems to be, 'We understand each other, I and Fortune ; she can take no change out of me. I enjoyed her smiles while they lasted ; she knows that I can calmly meet her frowns.'

⁴ This is the only hint of apology for his past life attributed to Otho in any of the versions of his last speech.

⁵ Vitellius no doubt began hostilities ; but it must be remembered that Vitellius had been proclaimed Emperor before Otho. Vitellius was proclaimed by the two German armies on the 2nd and 3rd of January ; Galba was not murdered till the 15th.

and announces his resolve to die.

Vitellius shall have joy of brother,¹ wife,² and children ;³ I need neither vengeance nor consolation. Others may have held Empire longer than I ; none shall have relinquished it with such fortitude. What? shall I suffer all this young Roman manhood, and these splendid armies, to be once more laid low and lost to their country? Let me carry with me the thought that you were ready to die for me : but yet live on. And now let me no longer delay your safety,⁴ nor you my fortitude ; to say more about my end would be a coward's part. Take this as a sure sign of my resolve, that I bring no complaint against any man ; it is only he who desires life that rails against Gods or men.'

His calm and intrepid language to his friends.

Having thus spoken, Otho addressed each person 48 kindly, according to his rank and age, imploring them to depart at once, and not aggravate the victor's wrath by remaining on ; using authority with the young, entreaties with the old, while by his calm face and intrepid language he checked their unseasonable tears. He then ordered boats⁵ and vehicles for his departing friends ; he destroyed all documents and letters containing strong expressions of devotion to himself, or of contumely towards Vitellius ; he gave also some trifling gratuities in money—not like a man about to die. After that, he offered consolation to a trembling and sorrowing youth Salvius

¹ His younger brother Lucius, consul in A.D. 48, and afterwards proconsul of Africa. He was put to death by Vespasian's party on his brother's fall, after a vain attempt to hold Campania for him (iv. 2).

² This was Galeria, his second wife. See chap. 64, where she is praised as *non inmixta tristibus* : i.e. she had taken no part in promoting or abetting severities. By her Vitellius had two children, a daughter and a son, who was still a child when put to death by Mucianus in the year following (iv. 80). This son had a serious impediment

in his speech (Suet. 6).

³ Vitellius had written on behalf of his mother and children to Otho's brother Titianus, threatening him with death if any harm came to them (i. 75). His wife Galeria and his mother Sextilia are described as models of female virtue and good feeling (ii. 64) ; his brother Lucius had been handsomely treated by Otho on his departure from Rome (i. 88).

⁴ I.e. your hope of pardon from Vitellius.

⁵ For navigation down the Po.

Cocceianus,¹ his brother's son, commending his affection, but rebuking him for his fears:—

Did he think that Vitellius would be so cruel as not to make him that one recompense for the preservation of his own entire family?² His own hastened end would earn the victor's clemency: for it was not in the extremity of despair, but with an army clamouring for battle, that he had saved the State from the last of calamities. He had won fame enough for himself; enough of nobility for his descendants. Coming after the Julii, the Claudii, and the Servii,³ he had been the first to bring Empire into a new family. Let Cocceianus therefore enter upon life with a stout heart; and let him never forget, nor yet remember overmuch, that Otho had been his uncle.⁴

He comforts his youthful nephew.

49 After this he dismissed every one, and rested for a while; and he was turning his thoughts to his end when his attention was diverted by news of a violent riot among the soldiers, who were threatening with death those taking their departure; their chief violence being directed against Verginius, whom they were besieging in his own quarters.

Having dismissed the company, he is recalled by a disturbance which he quells.

Having rebuked the authors of the disturbance, Otho returned and spent the time in conversing with his friends until they should all depart unharmed. Towards evening he quenched his thirst with a draught of cold water. Two daggers were then brought to him; he tested them both, placed one

After a tranquil night, he throws himself upon a dagger.

¹ This was the son of his brother Titianus, whom Otho had first left in charge of the city (i. 90), and afterward placed in command of his main army (ii. 23).

² Vitellius had written to Titianus threatening him and his son Cocceianus with death if anything happened to his own mother and children (i. 75). Otho left them unmolested, and refers here to the fact of his having done so.

³ *I.e.* Galba, in whose family the prænomen *Servius* had come to be used as a gentile name.

⁴ This touch may have been introduced by Tac. as a sort of prophecy of what actually occurred; for Suet. tells us that Domitian put this Salvius Cocceianus to death 'for having celebrated the birthday of his uncle Otho.' Tac. is fond of letting fall presentiments of some future calamity.

of them under his pillow, and having satisfied himself that his friends were gone, passed a tranquil, and it is said not a sleepless, night. With the first dawn, he threw himself upon the dagger. Hearing the groans of the dying man, his freedmen and slaves rushed in, along with Plotius Firmus, Prefect of the Guard: they found but a single wound.

His simple funeral; enthusiasm of his followers.

The funeral was hurried on at once, in accordance with his own earnest entreaty, in order to avoid the indignity of decapitation. The body was borne by Praetorian soldiers, who mingled praises with their tears as they covered his wound and his hands with kisses. Some of the men slew themselves beside the pyre; not because of any wrong thing done,¹ nor out of fear, but for love of their Prince, and in emulation of his glory. This example was followed by many afterwards at Bedriacum, at Placentia, and in other camps.

So perished Otho, in the 37th year of his age.² A modest sepulchre—one not likely to be disturbed—was built over his remains.

His origin and history.

Otho's origin was in the municipal town of 50 Ferentium.³ His father was of Consular,⁴ his grandfather of Praetorian, rank; his mother's family, though respectable, was less distinguished.⁵ His boyhood and youth were such as I have already described. Two notable deeds—the one infamous,

¹ Plut. confirms this account and makes the meaning clear. The words *non noxa neque ob metum* form a kind of hendiadys, one thing only being meant. Having committed no special offence against Vitellius they had no reason to fear his wrath.

² On April 16th A.D. 69, on the 92nd day of his reign. Galba had been murdered on January 15.

³ Ferentium in Etruria, near the modern Viterbo; not to be confounded

with the Latin town of Ferentinum on the *Via Latina*.

⁴ His father Lucius Salvius Otho had been cos. suf. in the year A.D. 33, and afterwards proconsul of Africa.

⁵ As Suet. calls his mother *splendida femina*, we may infer that she was the daughter of an *equus splendidus*. These were *equites* possessed of the senatorial census, sometimes called *primores equitum* (i. 4), sometimes *equites insignes* (Ann. xi. 5) or *illustres* (Ann. ii. 59, etc.).

the other glorious¹—gained for him in the eyes of posterity an equal share of good and of evil fame. And little as I deem that it befits the dignity of this history to search for marvels or to delight the reader's mind with fictions, I may not discredit a widely spread tradition. The inhabitants of Regium Lepidum² relate that on the day of the battle of Bedriacum a bird of unknown aspect alighted there in a frequented grove, where it remained, unterrified and undisturbed by the throng of people, or by the birds that flocked around it, until the moment when Otho put an end to himself. Then it disappeared; and a calculation of the time showed that the beginning and end of the marvel coincided with the last hours of Otho's life.

Prodigy at
Regium
Lepidum.

51 The renewal of grief at the funeral led to a fresh outbreak among the soldiers; and there was no one to suppress it. They turned with threats and entreaties to Verginius, begging him now to assume the Empire, now to undertake a mission to Valens and Caecina; when they burst into his house, he eluded them by stealing out at the back. Rubrius Gallus³ conveyed a petition for an amnesty from the cohorts quartered at Brixellum. This was at once granted, and the troops under Flavius Sabinus⁴ signified through him their submission to the conqueror.

The
soldiers
entreat
Verginius
to assume
the
Empire;

he eludes
them.

Amnesty to
Flavius
Sabinus
and his
men.

¹ Nothing could more clearly illustrate the Stoical view of suicide than this sentence. Tac. speaks as if all the vices and crimes of Otho's life were atoned for by the glory of his death. Martial is guilty of a still more preposterous exaggeration: *Sit Cato, dum vivit, sane vel Cesare maior; = Dum moritur, numquid maior Othone fuit?* (Epp. vi. 32, 5-6).

² On the Aemilian road, between Parma and Mutina, now *Reggio*.

³ This man was an accomplished

traitor. At the head of Nero's troops in Spain, he deserted to Galba (Dio lxxiii. 27). He now humbly goes over to Vitellius; and in chap. 99 we find him acting as intermediary between Caecina and Vespasian's brother Flavius Sabinus. The cohorts whose petition he now bore were the Praetorian Cohorts which Otho had taken off with him to Brixellum.

⁴ This, it will be remembered, was the corps of gladiators, which had been put under Flavius Sabinus after the defeat of Martius Macer (chap. 36).

Anxious
position
of the
Senators
at Mutina;

Hostilities being now everywhere at an end, the large company of Senators who had come out with Otho from Rome, and had then been left at Mutina, were in a position of great danger. When the news of Otho's defeat arrived, the soldiers refused to credit it; and believing the Senators to be unfriendly to Otho, they kept a watch upon their words, putting the worst construction upon their looks and their demeanour; and at last, by abuse and insult, they sought for some occasion to begin a massacre.

their abject
fears.

Then a new and different fear came upon the Senators now that the Vitellian party had triumphed: they might be thought to have been too slow in welcoming their victory. Trembling thus between fears on either side, they held a consultation. But no one¹ had any plan of his own to suggest; each man's safety lay in the participation of others in his offence. And their terrors were still further aggravated by the Municipal Council of Mutina, which offered them arms and money, and with ill-timed respect addressed them by the appellation of 'Conscript Fathers.'²

Quarrel
between
Licinius
Caecina
and Eprius
Marcellus.

Here a noteworthy quarrel broke out between Licinius Caecina and Marcellus Eprius,³ the former accusing the latter of facing both ways; no one else

¹ Tac. makes a slip here, not however unexampled: beginning his sentence with 'no one' he ends it as if 'every one' had been the Subject (*nemo privatim expedito consilio, inter multos societate culpae tutior*). So Hor. Sat. i. 1, 2.

² This chapter is a fine specimen of Tacitean irony. The picture of the imbecile terrors of the Senate is perfect; and Tac. adds no word of comment to spoil the effect. A modern writer, not trusting to his reader's wits to find it out for himself, would probably have felt it necessary to inform him that the per-

plexities of the Senators were ludicrous.

³ This man (whose full name was Titus Clodius Eprius Marcellus) is one of Tacitus's favourite aversions as practising all the most detestable arts of a *delator*. Yet he was a man of great distinction. Of humble origin, he won his way up under a succession of Emperors to all the great offices of state. He committed the unpardonable sin of being Thræsea's accuser and destroyer. Tac. speaks of him as a brazen ranting bully *uterat torvus ac minax, voce voltu oculis ardescens* (Ann. xvi. 29). See n. on ii. 10.

took part in the altercation. The name of Marcellus was hateful from the recollection of his accusations; it presented therefore a good object for attack, and had spurred on Caecina, as a newly risen man who had recently been admitted to the Senate, to gain distinction by attacking great personages. The dispute was ended by the intervention of their betters.

The Senators then retired in a body to Bologna, intending to deliberate there once again, and hoping for further news in the meantime. Scouts were posted on every road to interrogate each new arrival; among these was one of Otho's freedmen, who on being asked why he had left his master, replied that he was the bearer of his last commands:—

Otho was still living when he left; but he had broken with the joys of life, and his thoughts were all bent upon posterity.

The
Senators
retire to
Bologna;

news of
Otho's
death con-
firmed.

These words moved all to admiration. Shame forbade the asking of further questions: and all hearts turned towards Vitellius.¹

54 Among those present at these councils was Lucius, the brother of Vitellius, who was presenting himself for flatteries when suddenly Coenus, a freedman of Nero's, created consternation among them all by an unblushing falsehood, affirming that, *The 14th Legion² had come up and joined the troops from Brixellum; the victors had been cut to pieces; and the fortunes of the two parties were reversed.*

Alarming
report that
Otho was
alive and
victorious;

The object of this fiction was that Otho's passports,³ now disregarded, might recover their validity

object of
this false
report.

¹ I have translated *animi* by 'hearts,' believing it to be another case of Tacitean irony. The juxtaposition of the three ideas is too perfect to be accidental: (1) admiration for Otho; (2) the *pudor* which compelled silence;

(3) the heartfelt acceptance of the new Emperor.

² That legion being now, on its way from Dalmatia.

³ Called *diplomata* because folded in two: hence our word 'diploma.' These

with the news of his success. And Coenus indeed was conveyed rapidly to Rome: but not many days afterwards he was put to death by order of Vitellius. Meanwhile the belief of the soldiers that the story was true increased the danger of the Senators, whose terrors were intensified by the fact that the decision to quit Mutina and abandon the cause of Otho had been taken in public council. No further consultations were held; every man took thought for himself, until their fears were removed by a letter from Fabius Valens. And the admiration excited by Otho's death made the news of it travel all the faster.

Things quiet at Rome; the name of Vitellius is received with acclamation, and the Senate votes him the imperial powers.

At Rome there was no alarm. The Games of 55 Ceres¹ were attended as usual. And when it was authoritatively announced in the theatre that Otho was no more, and that Flavius Sabinus,² Prefect of the City, had administered to all the soldiers in the city the oath of allegiance to Vitellius, his name was received with acclamation. Images of Galba, wreathed with laurels and with flowers, were carried round the Temples by the people; ³ chaplets were piled up into a kind of mound near the Pool of Curtius, on the spot stained with the blood of the dying Emperor. In the Senate, all the honours devised during the long reigns of previous Emperors were at once voted; in addition, the German army was thanked and commended, and a mission was dispatched to offer it congratulations. A letter from Fabius Valens to

documents, signed by the Emperor, and filled in with the courier's or traveller's name, secured quarters for the bearer along the road and all necessary relays of horses, etc., for his journey.

¹ These games began on April 12th

and lasted till the 19th.

² Vespasian's elder brother.

³ Vitellius or his friends seem to have given out that he was Galba's avenger, and the senseless populace took up the cry.

the Consuls, couched in modest enough terms, was read aloud; but Caecina's modesty in not writing at all was more appreciated.¹

56 But Italy was afflicted by evils graver and more calamitous than war. The Vitellian soldiers spread themselves through the Municipal and Colonial towns, plundering, spoiling, ravishing. Tempted by lust or by money,² they plunged into every form of wickedness, sparing nothing sacred or profane. Some persons assumed the guise of soldiers in order to slay their own private enemies; while the soldiers who knew the country marked out well-stocked farms and wealthy proprietors for plunder, slaying all who offered resistance. The Generals were too much in the power of their men to prohibit such misdoings. Caecina was the less avaricious of the two Generals, but the more eager for popularity; Valens was so set on money and shameful gains himself that he took no notice of the misdemeanours of others. Impoverished as Italy had been for so long a time, she could ill support such bodies of horse and foot, ill endure all this loss, violence, and outrage.

Desolating march of the Vitellian army through Italy.

Its misdoings unchecked by the commanders.

57 Vitellius, meanwhile, knowing nothing of his own victory, was bringing up the remainder of the German army as though the war were all before him.³ A few of the veterans had been left in winter quarters,

Vitellius hears of the battle of Bedriacum;

¹ It was considered that no one but the Emperor had the right to address the Senate by letter. See iv. 4.

² *Venales* probably means that the only way to prevent their committing enormities was to buy them off. Godley suggests that 'they hired themselves out as braves.' This form of 'venality' may have been included with the rest; but the meaning seems to be of a more general kind. I understand *avidis* to refer to acts of lust.

³ This is the first indication given of what Vitellius was doing while the two armies were on the march. He was busy making up his own army, and had only accomplished a few days' march when he received the news of the battle of Bedriacum. We see how well justified Suetonius Paulinus was in asserting that little was to be feared from the arrival of Vitellius himself (chap. 32).

and new levies had been hurried on throughout Gaul, that the Legions left behind might be made up to their full strength.¹ The charge of the banks of the Rhine was committed to Hordeonius Flaccus, while Vitellius attached to himself a body of eight thousand² men selected from the British army. He had made but a few days' march when he heard of the victory at Bedriacum, and how the war had come to an end with the death of Otho. Thereupon he summoned an assembly, and lauded the valour of his soldiers to the skies. Entreated by the army to bestow equestrian rank on his freedman Asiaticus, he checked them for the unseemly adulation; yet such was his inconstancy that he granted at a private banquet the distinction which he had refused in public, and conferred the equestrian ring on Asiaticus—an infamous menial who had nothing but his vices to commend him.³

he commends his army in an assembly.

The two Mauretanias come over to Vitellius; Albinus the procurator is slain.

About the same time news arrived that the two Moorish Provinces had come over to Vitellius, and that Luceius Albinus, the Procurator, had been slain. This man had been appointed to the Caesariensian Province by Nero; Galba had added the government of Tingitana,⁴ and he had a considerable force at his disposal, consisting of nineteen cohorts, five wings of cavalry, and a large body of Moors, whose plundering and marauding habits kept them always fit for war.

¹ By *nomina legionum* is meant the nominal, as distinguished from the effective, strength of the legion. When the *nomina*, i.e. the individual units, did not each contain their full number, the legion was incomplete. This is what is meant by *inania legionum nomina* in iv. 14, 21.

² The Danubian legions had each sent on detachments (*vexilla*) of 2000 each. This seems to have been the usual maximum number for a *vexillum* of this kind. Vitellius exceeded that number in taking 8000 men out of the three British legions.

³ The expression is general; but what is meant is that it was to Vitellius that he so recommended himself. Tac. mentions this man's name in a catalogue of slaves of infamous notoriety (chap. 95), and thus records his death under Mucianus: *Asiaticus (is enim libertus) malam potentiam servili supplicio expiavit* (iv. 11).

⁴ The two Mauretanian provinces were Caesariensis, corresponding more or less to the W. part of Algeria; and Tingitana to the W., corresponding to Morocco.

On the assassination of Galba, Albinus had espoused the cause of Otho; and finding Africa too small for his ambitions, was threatening to cross the narrow strait which separates it from Spain. Alarmed by this movement, Cluvius Rufus¹ ordered the 10th Legion down to the shore as if for a crossing, while he sent on some Centurions to dispose the Moors in favour of Vitellius. This was no difficult thing to do in consequence of the great fame of the German army throughout the provinces; besides which a rumour was spread abroad that Albinus, not satisfied with the title of Procurator, was assuming the insignia of royalty and the name of Juba.²

59 Men's minds having thus turned, Asinius Pollio, who commanded a wing of cavalry, and was a staunch adherent of Albinus, was killed, along with Festus and Scipio, two Prefects of cohorts. Albinus himself, who was on his way from Tingitana to the Caesariensian Province, was murdered on landing there; his wife confronted the murderers and was killed along with him.

Vitellius made no inquiry into these occurrences. Unfit for serious affairs, he would dismiss with a brief hearing matters of the gravest moment.

Ordering his army to proceed by land, he himself descended the river Saône³ without any Imperial state, and with all the signs of his previous poverty about

Vitellius
reaches
Lyons,

¹ Cluvius Rufus was governor (*legatus Augusti pro praetore*) of the province of *Tarraconensis*, and apparently responsible also for the defence of the senatorial province of *Baetica*, which had no army of its own. For the distinction between senatorial and imperial provinces see n. on Ann. i. 76.

² The Numidian king Juba had been conquered by Caesar in B.C. 46; Augustus had restored the son to a

part of the ancient kingdom under the protectorate of Rome.

³ Vitellius followed the same route as Valens, passing into Italy by the Mont Genève. He journeyed down the Saône by boat, as the most luxurious mode of travelling. So Claudius, on his vaunted expedition to Britain in the year A.D. 43, travelled most of the way through Gaul by water.

him, until he was provided with a staff¹ and a handsome retinue by Junius Blaesus,² Governor of Lyonnese Gaul, a man of illustrious birth, generous soul, and corresponding wealth. But this service gained nothing but ingratitude for Blaesus, though Vitellius veiled his hatred of him under flatteries worthy only of a slave.

where he meets the leaders of both parties.

At Lyons, Vitellius was met by the leaders of both parties, the conquering and the conquered. He commended Valens and Caecina in a public assembly, and placed them on either side of his own Curule Chair. After that, he ordered the whole army to meet his infant son; on his arrival,³ he wrapped him in a military cloak, and carrying him in his own arms, named him 'Germanicus,' and invested him with all the insignia of Imperial rank—honours which, extravagant as they were in the moment of prosperity, served as some solace in misfortune.⁴

He calls his infant son 'Germanicus.'

Othonian centurions put to death; the leaders are treated with clemency.

The more prominent of the Othonian Centurions 60 were then put to death. This greatly alienated from Vitellius the armies of Illyricum;⁵ while the other Legions, catching the contagion, and filled with jealousy of the German soldiers, began to think of war. Suetonius Paulinus and Licinius Proculus were for some time kept in the sorry and squalid condition of

¹ What Tac. means by *ministeria* are no doubt the three great offices of the secretaries of state, as we might call them, who transacted the principal business of the Emperor: (1) the accountant (*a rationibus*); (2) the secretary (*ab epistulis*); and (3) the officer who attended to petitions (*a libellis*).

² Grandson of the Junius Blaesus who commanded the Pannonian army at the time of the mutiny in A.D. 14.

³ Thus his infant son was being brought from Rome to Lyons.

⁴ As the boy was only six years old, and was put to death in this same year by order of Mucianus, these words are

hardly applicable to the child himself. They rather represent the comment of a philosophic moralist looking on: Tac. could not resist the opportunity of indulging in one of his favourite sentiments. So for the child born to Arminius in captivity he forebodes a sad fate which he is to tell hereafter: *educatus Ravennae puer quo mox ludibrio confictatus sit in tempore memorabo* (Ann. i. 58).

⁵ 'The Illyrian armies' is a short phrase for the legions of Dalmatia, Moesia, and Pannonia. 'The other legions' are the 1st (*Adiutrix*), and those in Syria and Judaea.

accused persons; ¹ when granted an audience, they excused themselves on necessary rather than honourable pleas, taking credit to themselves for treachery, and pretending that the long march before the battle, the fatigue of the Othonian army, the mixing up of waggons with the troops, and other chance incidents, had been treacherously planned by themselves. Giving credit to them for perfidy, Vitellius forgave their loyalty.²

Otho's brother Salvius Titianus was left unmolested, saved by his affection for his brother, and by his own imbecility. Marius Celsus retained his Consulship; but it was generally believed—and afterwards made a subject of accusation in the Senate—that Caecilius Simplex had offered a sum of money for that office, together with the murder of Celsus. Vitellius rejected the proposal; but he afterwards bestowed the Consulship upon Simplex, without a price either in blood or money.

Trachalus was protected from his accusers by Galeria,³ the wife of Vitellius.

61 Amid the dangers of illustrious men I feel shame to relate how a certain Mariccus, a Boian of mean origin, dared to thrust himself into great affairs, and to challenge Rome to arms by pretending to divinity. Posing as the champion of Gaul, and as a God (for so he styled himself), he had got together a force of 8,000 men, and was drawing after him the neighbouring villages of the Aedui, when that most excellent

An obscure Boian called Mariccus stirs up a rising in Gaul,

¹ Referring to the sordid dress, etc., in which it was customary for persons on trial to present themselves.

² This is said in bitter irony. Some edd. would make the words *fidem absolvit* mean 'released them from their allegiance to Otho.'

³ For Galeria's character for humanity, see chap. 64; she was connected in some way with Trachalus. The offence of Trachalus was that he was supposed to have written Otho's speeches for him (i. 90).

but is soon over-powered and slain.

community¹ sent out a picked body of their youth, and with the aid of some cohorts supplied by Vitellius dispersed the crowd of fanatics. Mariccus himself was captured in the battle, and soon afterwards exposed to wild beasts; but as the beasts failed to devour him, the foolish populace believed him to be invulnerable until he was slain before the eyes of Vitellius.

Vitellius abstains from severities; he gives himself up to gluttony.

No further severities were inflicted upon either the persons or the property of the Othonians. The wills of such of them as had fallen in battle were respected; cases of intestacy were dealt with according to law; and if only Vitellius could have bridled his appetite, none need have been afraid of his rapacity. But his maw was foul and insatiable. Rome and Italy were ransacked to provide dainties for his palate; the roads from either sea hummed with the conveyance of them; the chief men in cities were ruined, and whole cities were wasted, in providing him with banquets, while the soldiers lost their old virtues in idleness and the pursuits of pleasure, and learnt to despise their General. 62

He declines the titles of 'Augustus' and 'Caesar.'

Vitellius sent on an edict to the city in which he declined for the present the title of 'Augustus,' and refused that of 'Caesar';² but he made no surrender of any of his powers.

Astrologers expelled; knights forbidden

The astrologers were expelled from Italy;³ and severe measures were taken to prevent Roman Knights from disgracing themselves in gladiatorial

¹ In Ann. iii. 43, Tacitus informs us that the noblest families of the Aedui sent their sons to the capital Augustodunum (*Autun*) for their education.

² Vitellius only assumed the name of 'Caesar' in the last moments before his fall (iii. 58).

³ Augustus, Tiberius, Claudius, and Vitellius all made abortive attempts to expel the astrologers from Rome. As Tac. says of them, they were a tribe of men *quod in civitate nostra et vetabitur semper et retinebitur* (i. 22).

shows.¹ Former Emperors had bribed, and still more often forced, men on to the arena; and many of the Colonial and Municipal towns had vied with one another in offering money to tempt the more dissolute of their youth to perform such services.

to appear
as gladiators.

63 The arrival of his brother, and the growing influence of other experts in despotism, spurred on Vitellius to acts of tyranny and violence. He ordered the death of Dolabella, whose seclusion by Otho in the Colony of Aquinum I have already mentioned.² On hearing of Otho's death, Dolabella had returned to Rome; for this he was cited before Flavius Sabinus, Prefect of the City,³ by Plancius Varus, an ex-Praetor and one of his own intimate friends, on the charge that, after escaping from custody, he had offered himself as a leader for the conquered cause. He was also accused of having tampered with a cohort stationed at Ostia. Varus produced no proof of these serious accusations; and then repenting of his villainy when it was too late, asked pardon for having committed it. In a case of such importance Flavius Sabinus hesitated; but Triaria,⁴ the wife of Lucius Vitellius, with more than feminine ferocity, warned him *not to cultivate a reputation for clemency to the peril of the Emperor*. Sabinus was by nature merciful; but could easily be swayed when possessed by fear. Dolabella's danger made him tremble for himself;

Vitellius
orders the
death of
Dolabella.

Ferocity of
Triaria.

¹ Juvenal castigates the appearance of Roman nobles on the gladiatorial arena—often under compulsion—as the vilest of their degradations (viii. 202-210). Nero bribed young nobles to drive chariots in the circus, which was only a little less disgraceful; and he had no scruple in bribing Roman knights to fight as gladiators (Ann. xiv. 14).

² *I.e.* in i. 88.

³ On the office of *praefectus urbi* see

Ann. vi. 11 and n. As the prefect was responsible for order in the city and for 100 miles round it, the escape of Dolabella would naturally come under his jurisdiction.

⁴ We hear again of this lady's truculent proceedings in iii. 77 on the occasion of the capture of Terracina by her husband. Like Plancina, the wife of Cn. Piso (Ann. ii. 55), she was a militant woman, wearing a sword and doing execution with it.

and lest he should be thought to have befriended him, he hurled him to his fall.

Dolabella
murdered
at Inter-
amnium.

Thereupon Vitellius, who was afraid of Dolabella, 64 and also hated him for having married his former wife Petronia, wrote summoning him to his presence, giving orders that instead of travelling by the frequented Flaminian Way, he was to be taken aside to Interamnium and there put to death.¹ The assassin, however, not to waste time, struck his prisoner down in a roadside inn and cut his throat—an act which gave an ill name to the new reign, affording, as it did, the first indication of its character.² Triaria's brutality was enhanced by the contrast presented to it so near home by the modest example set by Galeria,³ the Emperor's wife, who would have nothing to do with cruelties. No less admirable was Sextilia,⁴ the mother of the two Vitellii, a lady of the olden school, who on receiving her son's first letter was reported to have remarked that, *It was not a Germanicus, but a Vitellius, that she had brought into the world.*⁵ Nor from that day forth did any of the allurements of her high station, or any public

Noble
conduct of
Galeria the
wife, and
Sextilia the
mother, of
Vitellius.

¹ Besides committing the offence of marrying the divorced wife of Vitellius, Dolabella was marked out by his high birth and powerful connexions as a possible pretender, though his own career does not seem to have been one of any great distinction. From the manner in which Tac. tells the death of Dolabella it might be inferred that Vitellius was in Rome at the time. But the next chap. shows that he was still at Lyons.

² The meaning conveyed is that his whole reign was to be of a piece with this beginning. Similarly in Ann. i. 6 (*primum facinus novi principatus fuit Postumi Agrippae caedes*); and in xiii. 1 (*prima novo principatu mors Iunii Silani proconsulis Asiae . . . paratur*) the insinuation suggested is that the reigns of Tiberius and Nero

respectively consisted of one long catalogue of cruelties.

³ Galeria Fundana, the second wife of Vitellius, was the daughter of a man of only praetorian rank (Suet. Vit. 6).

⁴ Sextilia is similarly described by Suet. as *probatissima nec ignobilis femina* (Vit. 3). See the pathetic reference to her in iii. 67. It is refreshing to find that Tacitus can do justice to a noble woman, even when connected with Vitellius.

⁵ The title 'Germanicus' had been conferred on Vitellius by his enthusiastic soldiery on setting out on their southward march (i. 62). Vitellius had evidently signed himself by that title in writing to inform his mother of his elevation.

flatteries, ever rouse her to exultation; she felt only the calamities of her house.

65 After leaving Lyons, Vitellius was overtaken by Cluvius Rufus, who had left his Province of Spain, and was anxious at heart though he bore joy and congratulations on his face. For he knew that he had been denounced by the imperial freedman Hilarus, who had asserted that on hearing of the elevation of Otho and Vitellius, Cluvius¹ had aimed at power for himself, and had attempted to keep possession of Spain; with which view he had issued passports without any Emperor's name on the face of them. Hilarus also represented that certain passages in the speeches of Cluvius were insulting to Vitellius, and intended to attract favour to himself.

Cluvius Rufus joins Vitellius at Lyons; and is allowed to govern his province in absence.

But Cluvius held his own; and Vitellius ordered his freedman to be punished into the bargain. He attached Cluvius to his suite, and permitted him to govern Spain in absence, after the example of Lucius Arruntius.² Arruntius, indeed, had been kept at home because Tiberius was afraid of him; Vitellius had no such fear in retaining Cluvius.

No similar consideration was shown to Trebellius Maximus. Trebellius had been chased out of Britain by his enraged soldiery,³ and Vitellius now sent Vettius Bolanus,⁴ a member of his suite, to replace him.

Trebellius replaced in Britain by Bolanus.

¹ Cluvius Rufus should have been warmly welcomed, as he had just saved the Vitellian interest from the danger threatening it in Morocco (chaps. 58 and 59).

² L. Arruntius is mentioned in the *Annals* (vi. 27) as the most conspicuous example of Tiberius' policy of keeping illustrious governors in Rome to prevent their becoming too powerful in their provinces. Abdul, the late Turkish Sultan, pursued the opposite

plan. Apprehensive of assassination, and afraid of men of ability, he banished one by one all his ablest statesmen, and thus impoverished the administration of the Empire.

³ See above, i. 60.

⁴ In the *Agricola* Tac. describes this governor (A.D. 69-71) as attempting to rule Britain by a policy of conciliation: *innocens Bolanus et nullis delictis invisus caritatem paraverat loco auctoritatis* (Agr. 16).

Difficulties with the defeated legions ; especially with the 14th and the Batavian cohorts.

Dangerous riot at Turin ;

the 14th are sent back to Britain.

The unbroken spirit of the defeated Legions caused Vitellius much anxiety. Scattered throughout Italy and mingling with the conquerors, they made no secret of their hostility. Especially insolent were the men of the 14th Legion, who declared that they had never been defeated:—*Their main strength had not been present at Bedriacum ; only a detachment had been beaten.* It was resolved therefore to send them back to Britain, whence they had been brought over by Nero, and meanwhile to quarter with them the Batavian cohorts because of their old feud with the 14th. Between such foes, with arms in their hands, peace was not long preserved. At Turin, a Batavian accused a craftsman of cheating him ; a legionary claimed the man as his host, and offered him protection ; comrades collected on either side ; from words they came to blows, and a fierce battle would have ensued had not a couple of Praetorian Cohorts espoused the cause of the 14th and overawed the Batavians. Now Vitellius believed the Batavians to be devoted to himself ; he attached them therefore to his own army, and ordered the 14th to recross the Graian Alps¹ by a route which should avoid Vienne—for he was afraid of the Viennese also.² On the night of their departure the Legion left a number of fires burning by which a part of the Colony was destroyed—a loss which, like other misfortunes of war, was forgotten amid the greater calamities of

¹ This is the pass now known as the Little St. Bernard, at the head of the Dora Baltea on the Italian side. Descending thence the valley of the Isère, and passing through the modern Tarentaise, the road branches into two on descending from the mountains, the right hand road leading to Lyons, that on the left pursuing the course of the Isère past the modern Grenoble to its junction with the Rhone not far below Vienne.

The object of sending the legion over the Little St. Bernard, instead of over the Mont Genève, was to avoid the necessity of passing by Vienne: this object the unruly part of the legion endeavoured to frustrate by taking the road to Vienne at the bifurcation, instead of that direct to Lyons.

² For the reasons for this fear see i. 65 and 66.

other cities. The descent from the Alps accomplished, the more mutinous spirits of the 14th prepared to march for Vienne; but the better sort united to put them down,¹ and the Legion passed over to Britain.

- 67 The Emperor's next fear was as to the Praetorian Cohorts. At first they were kept apart; they were then soothed by an honourable discharge, and surrendered their arms to the Tribunes. Afterwards, however, when the war with Vespasian broke out, they resumed their service and formed the main strength of the Flavian party.

The Praetorians discharged;

The 1st Naval Legion was sent to Spain to grow tame in peace and idleness; the 11th and 7th were sent back to their winter quarters;² the 13th was told off to build amphitheatres. For Caecina and Valens were preparing to hold shows of gladiators, the latter at Bologna, the former at Cremona; and Vitellius was never so absorbed in business as to forget his pleasures.

the other Othonian legions are dispersed.

- 68 The conquered army had thus been quietly dispersed when a riot broke out among the conquerors from a cause which would have been ridiculous had not the number of the slain brought much fresh odium upon Vitellius. He was dining at Ticinum with Verginius as his guest. Now Legates and Tribunes take their manners from their imperial masters, following their example whether in temperance or conviviality, while the soldiers are well-conducted or disorderly on the same principle. The camp of Vitellius was a scene of disorder, drunkenness, and nocturnal orgies,

Military riot at Ticinum;

Verginius is in danger;

¹ It is interesting to find how often, even amid the disorders of civil war, when we hear so much of military insubordination, the old spirit of Roman discipline reasserted itself, often under the most untoward circumstances. Tac. himself remarks how closely the ex-

trêmes of license and discipline followed upon each other; *inde scelerum ac suppliciorum vices, et mixtus obsequio furor* (iv. 27).

² The 11th to Dalmatia, the 7th to Pannonia.

rather than of proper military discipline; and it happened that two soldiers, one a man of the 5th Legion, the other a Gaulish auxiliary, having challenged each other by way of sport to a wrestling bout, the legionary was thrown. The Gaul jeered at him; the spectators took sides with the one or the other; the legionaries made a murderous attack upon the auxiliaries, and two of their cohorts were cut to pieces.¹

This tumult only found a remedy in another. A cloud of dust, with a flash of arms, was seen in the distance; a sudden cry was raised among the men that the 14th Legion had turned back to do battle with them; and not till the party was recognised as the rear-guard² did the panic subside.

and his life
is with
difficulty
saved.

Meantime the soldiers encountered a slave of Verginius, whom they accused of a design to murder Vitellius; they rushed off at once to the banquet, shouting for the death of Verginius. Timorous and ready to suspect as Vitellius was, he had no doubt of the innocence of Verginius; yet he could with difficulty keep back the men who were demanding the death of a Consular who had once been their own General. No one was more persistently attacked in every tumult than Verginius; the men admired him and respected him as they ever did, but they hated him for having scorned their offer.³

Next day Vitellius received the deputation of the Senate which he had ordered to await him at that place; he then passed on to the camp, where he

¹ It is hard to believe that two whole cohorts can have been destroyed (*interfectae*); and yet Tac. does not seem to use the verb *interficere* in any but its natural sense.

² The phrase used by Tac. is *agminis*

coactores, because it was part of the business of the rear-guard to drive on the stragglers.

³ The allusion here is to Verginius having refused the offer of the army to make him Emperor.

commended the soldiers for their devotion. The auxiliaries grumbled at the increased insolence of the legionaries and the impunity granted them; and to prevent further violence on the part of the Batavian cohorts, they were sent back to Germany—the beginning of a new war,¹ at once foreign and domestic, being thus prepared for us by destiny.

The Batavian cohorts are sent back to Germany ;

The large number of Gallic auxiliaries taken on at the beginning of the revolt to make an empty show of force, were now sent back to their own homes; while to relieve an exchequer impoverished by largesses, Vitellius ordered the strength of the Legions and auxiliary forces to be cut down, stopped recruiting, and offered discharges to all and sundry—measures fatal to the public service and also unpopular with the army, seeing that the same amount of duty was distributed among fewer men, and that each man's turn of work or danger would come round more frequently. The vigour also of the men was sapped by luxurious living—very different from the stern discipline practised by our ancestors, who deemed that the greatness of Rome depended upon valour rather than upon money.

the Gallic auxiliaries are sent back to their homes, and the strength of the legions is cut down.

70 From Ticinum Vitellius turned aside to Cremona; and after witnessing Caecina's gladiatorial show, conceived a desire to visit the field of Bedriacum, and behold with his own eyes the traces of his recent victory. It was a horrible and ghastly spectacle. Not forty days had elapsed since the battle. The mangled bodies, the severed limbs, the rotting corpses of men and horses: the blood-stained ground, the levelled trees and trampled crops, made up a scene of

Vitellius visits the battlefield of Bedriacum—a hideous and pathetic spectacle.

¹ In reference to the war with Civilis the present year (iv. 54-70 and v. 14-26).

hideous desolation. Not less revolting was that part of the road which the people of Cremona had strewn with laurels and with roses, building up altars and slaying victims as if for an Oriental monarch—tokens of joy for the moment, soon to turn to their destruction.

Valens and Caecina were there, pointing out each incident of the battle:—*Here the Legions had dashed in ; there the cavalry had sprung up ; there the auxiliaries had outflanked the enemy.* The Tribunes and the Prefects all magnified their own achievements, mingling the false or the exaggerated with the true. The common soldiers also turned aside from the road, shouting joyously as they recognised each scene of conflict, and gazing with eyes of wonder on the piles of arms and heaps of corpses: there were some too whom the thought of life's varied chances moved to pity and to tears. But Vitellius never turned his eyes away; he felt no horror at those thousands of unburied citizens; he even revelled in the sight, and ignorant of his approaching doom offered sacrifice to the deities of the place.¹

His
callousness
at the
sight.

His dis-
solute
progress to
Rome.

After that Fabius Valens gave a show of gladiators at Bologna, for which the apparatus was brought up from Rome. The nearer Vitellius approached to the city, the more dissolute was his progress, with its hordes of actors and eunuchs, after the fashion of Nero's court. For Vitellius openly proclaimed himself an admirer of that Emperor, having been accustomed to attend him at his entertainments,² not from

71

¹ There are few descriptions in Tac. so powerful as that contained in this chapter; remarkable alike for the gruesome and the pathetic, and for its picture of the utter callousness of Vitellius.

² It is tempting here to conjecture *cenantem* for *cantantem*, as seems almost to be required by the sense. The point of the passage is that Vitellius acquired his habits of gluttony from his constantly feasting with Nero, which he did not,

compulsion, as did even the best of men, but because he was given over, like a bondsman bought and sold, to gluttony and gormandising.

To leave some months vacant for the Consulships of Valens and Caecina, Vitellius cut short the period for which that office was to be held by others.¹ The claim of Martius Macer² was ignored because he was a partisan of Otho's, while that of Valerius Marinus, who had been named by Galba, was postponed; not that he had given any cause for offence, but because his gentle nature was likely to submit to the affront with meekness. Pedanius Costa was passed over, being disliked by the Emperor for having risen against Nero and encouraged Verginius, though another reason was assigned. For all which things thanks were tendered to Vitellius after the usual slavish fashion.

Appoint-
ment of
consuls for
the rest of
the year.

72 An imposture which seemed formidable at the beginning collapsed after a few days. A man appeared who pretended to be Scribonianus Camerinus,³ asserting that during the terror of the Neronian time he had hidden himself in Histria, because the Crassi

A slave,
pretending
to be
Scriboni-
anus,
attracts a
following;

like others, from necessity, but because he was *luxu et saginae mancipatus emptusque*. M reads *cantantem*; but there is no necessary connexion between singing and gormandising; while the word *cantantem* would naturally suggest itself to any scribe acquainted with the notoriety of Nero's performances as a singer. If *cantantem* stands, the meaning will be that Vitellius accompanied Nero on his singing tours, in the course of which there would be much high feasting.

¹ Otho's destinations for the consulship were not interfered with, but in order to find room for Valens and Caecina the ordinary *nundinum*, or period of four months, for which consuls suffect were usually appointed, was changed to one of two months. Thus the consulship of the Sabini

(Caelius Sabinus and Flavius Sabinus), which should have lasted till the end of August, came to an end on the 30th of June. Their successors, Arrius Antoninus and Marius Celsus, were similarly treated, vacating office on the 31st of August and thus leaving the way open for Valens and Caecina. See i. 77 and n.

² Nothing is known of the consulship having been promised to Martius Macer. He had commanded the gladiators opposite Cremona.

³ It is not very clear who this person was. Heraeus supposes him to have been a son of M. Licinius Crassus Frugi, who was cos. in the year A.D. 64, and who, as we have seen (in n. on i. 48), was accused by Regulus and put to death by Nero. See also iv. 42.

but is caught and executed.

had had clients and property there in former days, and a kindly feeling for their name still survived. This tale he communicated to a number of bad characters; a credulous multitude, with a few soldiers, ignorant of the fraud, or attracted by disorder, gathered eagerly round him: but when he was dragged before Vitellius and asked who he was, his story was found to have no truth in it. He was recognised by his master as a runaway slave of the name of Geta, and was executed in the manner usual for his class.

Delight of Vitellius when he hears that the East is favourable to him.

The extent to which the arrogance and sloth of Vitellius increased when couriers from Syria and Judaea brought word that the East had taken the oath of allegiance to him, can scarcely be credited. For the name and fame of Vespasian—though as yet only vaguely, and on no sure authority—were constantly on men's lips, and Vitellius would flare up at any mention of him; but now, as though he were without a rival, he and his army plunged into all the excesses of cruelty, lust, and rapine that are known among foreign nations. 73

Vespasian prepares for war.

Vespasian meanwhile was preparing for war, and reviewing his resources far and near. His soldiers were so ready to support him that when he dictated to them the oath of allegiance, with all the customary prayers for Vitellius, they listened in silence. Mucianus was not ill-disposed towards Vespasian, though he was more partial to Titus; and Tiberius Alexander, Prefect of Egypt, had made common cause with him. The 3rd Legion,¹ which had been transferred to Moesia from Syria, Vespasian counted on as his own;² and 74

¹ This legion, the 3rd (*Gallica*), had been transferred from Syria to Moesia at the end of Nero's reign, and gained the victory over the Rhoxolani related in i. 79.

² The edd. generally have supposed that *Mucianus* is the subject to *numerat* (*i.e.* that it was Mucianus, and not Vespasian, who counted on the 3rd legion as his own), mainly because

the other Legions of Illyricum, he hoped, would follow its example. For the whole army was incensed at the insolence of the soldiers who came out from Vitellius, who with their unkempt persons and uncouth speech scoffed at all others as their inferiors.

But the magnitude of such a war induced periods of hesitation. At one moment Vespasian's hopes ran high; at another he reflected on the risks:—

Yet he had moments of doubt :

What a day would it be for him when he committed his own sixty years, and his two young sons, to the chances of war! Private ambitions admitted of degrees; men might take a little more, or a little less, as they pleased, out of the hand of fortune: but when a man aimed at Empire, there was no middle point between triumph and disaster.

75 The strength of the German army, well known to him as a soldier, was ever before his eyes:—

His own Legions were without experience of civil war; those of Vitellius had been victorious; there was more grumbling than strength upon the conquered side. Sedition had sapped the loyalty of the soldiers; any single man might be a source of danger. What would infantry and cavalry avail if any man, at any moment, might secure a reward from the opposite side by an act of

the German army was strong;

and there was the risk of assassination.

the 3rd legion had originally been part of the Syrian army, which was under the command of Mucianus. But a careful reading of chap. 74 as a whole shows that Vespasian is, in thought, the subject of the whole passage from *At Vespasianus* down to *irridebant* in l. 10. Vespasian is passing in review the various elements of hope; Mucianus (or rather *Muciani animus*) is mentioned next after the favourable disposition of the soldiery; then comes Tiberius Alexander; and then the fact that Vespasian could specially count upon the 3rd legion. It is true that that legion had been under Mucianus in Syria; but there had been close connexion all along between the Syrian

and Judæan armies; and it was by Nero's order that the 3rd had been separated from the Syrian army and sent into Moesia. What may have been the special reasons which bound the 3rd legion to Vespasian we do not know; but the same may be said of Mucianus. Spooner curiously enough makes Mucianus the subject to *numerabat* in his note on the present passage, but Vespasian in his note on chap. 85. Henderson (p. 142) takes the view given in this note. Perhaps 'counted on it as his own' only means that he had as much confidence in it as in the rest of the eastern army, from which it had been separated.

crime? It was thus that Scribonianus had been slain under Claudius;¹ thus had his assassin Volaginius been advanced from the ranks to high military command.² It was easier to set the world in motion than to avoid the dagger of one man.

Mucianus urges him to aim at empire.

Such fears made Vespasian hesitate; but he was 76 emboldened by others of his Legates and his friends, and especially by Mucianus, who after many private conversations³ addressed him openly as follows:—

‘Men who embark upon great enterprises must needs consider whether the thing they are taking in hand is to be of advantage to the State, and glorious for themselves, whether it be easy, or at least not too difficult, of accomplishment. They must consider also whether their adviser shares the perils of his own counsels; and to whom, should fortune favour, the highest honours are to fall. I am now calling you, Vespasian, to Empire: what benefits your rule shall confer on the State, what glory on yourself, lies, under the Gods, in your own hand. Be not disturbed because I seem to flatter you; to be chosen after Vitellius were more like an insult than a distinction. We are not rising against a man of genius like Augustus, or a crafty old man like Tiberius; nor yet against a house long established in power, like that of Gaius, Claudius, and Nero. You gave way indeed before the high ancestry of Galba; but to remain inactive, to abandon the State to pollution and perdition, would be mere slothfulness and poltroonery, even if slavery were as certain to bring you security as dishonour. The moment is past and gone when you might have been supposed not to wish for Empire;

¹ See n. on i. 89.

² This promotion (says Heraeus) was to the position of a centurion *primi pili*.

³ The words *secreti sermones* do not necessarily mean personal interviews; they may refer to confidential communications carried on by go-betweens

—largely perhaps through Titus—like those between Caecina and Flavius Sabinus through Rubrius Gallus (chap. 99). The word *coram* means that others besides themselves were present, as we learn from the opening of chap. 78.

your only resource is to seize it. Have you forgotten how Corbulo¹ was slain? His birth, doubtless, was nobler than ours; but Nero was also nobler than Vitellius. The enemy that is afraid of you will not question your nobility.²

That an Emperor can be created by an army has been shown by Vitellius himself: a man who had seen no service, who enjoyed no military reputation, and who rose to power because men hated Galba. Even Otho was not overcome by generalship or superior force, but by his own premature despair; and Vitellius has transformed him into a great and much-regretted prince. In the meantime he is dispersing his Legions, disbanding his auxiliaries, sowing day by day the seeds of a fresh war. Whatever ardour or spirit his soldiers once possessed is being wasted in gluttony and revelry, and in emulating their chief. In Judaea, Syria, and Egypt, you have nine Legions of full strength, unweakened by war, untainted by sedition; you have a soldiery inured to arms, and conquerors over a foreign foe; you are strong in fleets,³ and in auxiliaries of horse and foot; you have Princes⁴ of assured fidelity and an experience that none can equal.

77 *I claim nothing for myself except not to be ranked below Valens and Caecina; yet do not spurn Mucianus as an*

¹ This is Cn. Domitius Corbulo, the famous general of Nero's reign, in describing whom Tac. has left us the finest picture we possess of the state and manner of a Roman general at the head of a great army, as well as his wholesome disciplinary powers (see esp. Ann. xiii. 35 and xv. 28-30). After his Armenian and Parthian campaigns he was recalled and ordered by Nero to put an end to himself.

² This fine but untranslatable sentence (*satis clarus est apud timentem quisquis timetur*) recalls the speech of Napoleon to the Grand Duke who after the capitulation at Ulm was showing him the portraits of his ancestors. 'But I,' said Napoleon, striking himself on

the breast, 'am my own ancestor.' The meaning is that if a man can make himself formidable to his antagonist he need not worry himself about his birth; or rather, 'If a man is afraid of you, your nobility will be good enough for him.'

³ The principal fleet at his command was in the Black Sea: there was also a fleet off the Syrian coast. The important strategic use which might have been made of these fleets had Vitellius been strong enough (like Caesar against Pompey, and Augustus against Antony) to carry the war into the East, is well brought out in chap. 83.

⁴ See chaps. 4 and 81, and v. 1.

associate because you do not find in him a rival. I put myself before Vitellius, but after you. Your house has won triumphal honours;¹ you have two young sons, one of whom is now fit for Empire, and has already gained distinction in the German armies, in his first years of service. It were strange if I were to dispute the Empire with one whose son, if I were Emperor, I would myself adopt. Between you and me there will be no equal apportionment of success or failure. If we prove victors, I shall hold such place of honour as you may grant to me; the hazards and the dangers we shall endure in common. Nay, it will be the better way for you to direct the armies, and leave the battles and the chances of war to me. The conquered side are to-day under a sterner discipline than their conquerors; wrath, hatred, and lust of revenge are kindling their valour; the other side are becoming enfeebled by pride and insolence. War of itself will open up and disclose the concealed but festering sores of the victorious faction; and I put no less trust in the slothfulness, the incapacity, the brutality of Vitellius, than in your own thrift, vigilance, and sagacity.² And our cause will be a better cause in war than in peace: for those who meditate revolt have already revolted.'

Vespasian is also encouraged by prophecies and omens.

Mucianus having thus spoken, the others boldly 78 crowded round Vespasian, and encouraged him; they reminded him of certain prophetic utterances, and of certain movements of the stars. For Vespasian himself was not insensible to influences of this kind; when he became Emperor, he openly employed a certain astrologer called Seleucus as his director and

¹ Vespasian had been awarded triumphal honours for his successes in Britain when in command of the 2nd legion in the year A.D. 43.

² It is a remarkable instance of Tacitean carelessness that he should

have used twice in the same sentence his favourite device of stringing together three substantives without a copula, giving the idea of three knocks with a hammer (*vigilantia parsimonia sapientia—torpore inscitia saevitia*).

seer. Old omens now recurred to his mind. A lofty cypress tree on his property had suddenly fallen: next day it had grown again on the same spot, as tall as before, and more exuberant.¹ The soothsayers had agreed in pronouncing this a great and fortunate omen, foreboding for him, when quite a youth, some signal honour. At first, the promise of the omen seemed to be fulfilled by his triumphal honours, his Consulship, and the glory of the Judæan war; but when he had gained these things, he began to believe that Empire was portended for him.

Now between Syria and Judæa there lies a mountain called Mount Carmel,² with a God of the same name. This God, as prescribed by ancient tradition, has neither temple nor image: there is only an altar, and a worship. When Vespasian was sacrificing there, nursing secret ambitions in his mind, the priest Basilides, after repeated examination of the entrails, declared:—

'Whatever it is that you are designing, Vespasian—whether it be the building of a house, or an extension of your boundaries, or a larger number of slaves—know that you are to have a big mansion, a vast domain, and a multitude of attendants.'

These dark sayings had been at once caught up by popular rumour, and now found interpreters. The multitude talked of little else, and they were

He con-
sults the
God on
Mount
Carmel,

and gets a
favourable
response.

¹ Dr. J. G. Frazer connects this tale with the idea common to the folk-lore of various countries, that the fate of persons or families may be bound up in that of trees. There was a 'Life tree' of the Manchu dynasty at Pekin; and there are many similar examples, such as that of the Edgewell oak near the Castle of Dalhousie in Scotland. Besides telling the above story much as Tac. tells it, Suet. adds that on each of the three occasions when Vespasian's

mother was delivered of a child, an oak in the family garden, sacred to Mars, produced a new shoot: on the third occasion, when Vespasian was born, the shoot was as large as a tree; whereupon the father Sabinus announced to his incredulous mother *nepotem ei Caesarem genitum*.

² A spur of the Antilibanus, on the borders of Phœnicia; it stands up boldly from the Mediterranean.

discussed freely before Vespasian himself; for men speak freely into the ear of hope.

Vespasian and Mucianus part.

Their resolve now formed, Mucianus and Vespasian parted, the former making for Antioch, the capital of Syria, the latter for Caesarea, the chief town of Judaea.

On the 1st of July, Vespasian is proclaimed Emperor in Egypt; in Judaea on the 3rd,

The first step towards bestowing the Empire 79 on Vespasian was taken by the prompt action of Tiberius Alexander in Egypt, who on the 1st of July administered the oath of fidelity to the Legions. That day was afterwards kept as the day of Vespasian's accession, although it was not till the 3rd of July that the Judaeian army took the oath to himself; which they did with such alacrity that they did not even await for the return from Syria of his son Titus, who had been the medium of consultation between his father and Mucianus. It was all done by the soldiers on the spur of the moment, without any prepared speech, and without any assemblage of the Legions.

where a small body of soldiers hail him as 'Imperator.'

For when all were looking for a proper time 80 and place, and, what is the hardest thing of all in such cases, a voice to say the first word, their minds filled with fears and hopes, with probabilities and chances, Vespasian was greeted on coming out of his chamber, with cries of 'Imperator!' by a small body of soldiers who were standing by in the ordinary way to salute their Legate. Others, running up, addressed him as 'Caesar' and 'Augustus,' adding thereto the whole roll of Imperial titles.

He takes his elevation calmly.

Thus did they pass from a state of fear to one of confidence;¹ while Vespasian himself, unchanged in

¹ The phrase *mens a metu ad fortunam transierat* is difficult. *Fortuna* is something more here than mere suc-

cess; yet it scarcely amounts to a personification. The idea is that men's minds passed from a state of fear to

his change of state, displayed neither arrogance nor exultation. As soon as he had scattered the mist spread over his eyes by so dizzy an elevation,¹ he acknowledged, in soldierlike words, the felicitations pouring in on every side. This was the very thing that Mucianus was waiting for; he at once administered the oath of allegiance to the willing soldiery. He then entered the theatre² at Antioch, where the people are wont to deliberate, and addressed the crowd that flocked in with their adulations; for he was one who could employ all the graces of Greek eloquence, and knew how to set off with a certain artistic effect everything that he said or did.

Mucianus addresses the people at Antioch;

What inflamed the Province and the army most of all was the assertion of Mucianus that Vitellius had determined to bring over the German armies to the lucrative and peaceful service of Syria, which the Syrian Legions were to exchange for the wintry skies and severe toils of Germany. For the provincials delighted in their accustomed intercourse with the soldiers, united with them, as many of them were, by ties of blood and friendship; while the soldiers were attached to the familiar camp in which they had served so long, and loved it as a home.

he assures the army that it was to be transferred to Germany.

81 By the 15th of July all Syria had taken the same oath. Sohaemus³ and his kingdom joined the cause

Sohaemus, Antiochus, Agrippa,

one of joyful acceptance and recognition of the high station which fortune was conferring upon Vespasian. The men gave up their fears and hesitations, and accepted with alacrity the chances of high fortune which the happy omen of the salutation of Vespasian as 'Imperator' seemed to carry with it.

¹ The metaphor is bold. The passage quoted by Spooner from Livy xxvi. 45 (*quidam stantibus scalis, cum altitudo caliginem oculis offudisset, ad terram delati sunt*), shows that the

idea is that of the dizziness caused by looking down from a great height, mingled with the more ordinary idea of a mist cast over the eyes. Our phrase 'to lose one's head' is used in a similar double sense, literal and metaphorical.

² So when the silversmiths at Ephesus raised a riot against St. Paul, 'the people rushed with one accord into the theatre' (Acts xix. 29).

³ Sohaemus, a prince of Emesa in Syria, had been promoted by Nero to

and all the
East
support
Vespasian.

with no inconsiderable army; Antiochus also, the richest of the subject Kings, with his great ancestral possessions. Before long Agrippa,¹ summoned by secret messengers of his own before the news had reached Vitellius, was hurrying over the seas from Rome; his queen Berenice, then in the full bloom of youth and beauty, no less warmly espoused the cause, and commended herself even to the aged Vespasian by the splendour of her gifts. All the sea-board Provinces, as far as Asia and Achaia, took the oath, with the whole stretch of inland country up to Pontus and Armenia; the Legates, however, who governed these districts were without troops, no Legions as yet having been assigned to Cappadocia.²

A council on the whole state of affairs was held at Berytus,³ where Mucianus arrived with the Legates and Tribunes and the more distinguished Centurions and soldiers; a picked body also of smart troops came from the Judaeen army, together with such an array of horse and foot and emulous Princes as presented all the outward splendour of an Imperial court.

Warlike
preparations
are
pushed on.

The first warlike preparation was to raise levies 82
and call up the veterans. The strong cities were appointed for the manufacture of arms; gold and silver money was coined at Antioch: everything being done

the kingship of Sophene, a territory on the upper Euphrates. Antiochus, a Selucid, king of Commagene and part of Cilicia, was deposed by Vespasian, who erected that country into a province in A.D. 72.

¹ This was Herod Agrippa the Second, son of Herod Agrippa the First, whose death is recorded in Acts xii. 20-23. He was the brother and also the husband (her third) of the beautiful Berenice. On his father's death Judaea had been placed under a procurator who was subordinate to

the governor (*legatus Caesaris pro praetore*) of Syria. Herod Agrippa himself received the principality of Chalcis in Syria, which he afterwards exchanged for a territory E. of the Jordan.

²-Cappadocia was reduced to the form of a province by Vespasian (Suet. Vesp. 8).

³ Beirut (made into a colony by Augustus under the title of *Julia Augusta Felix Berytus*) would be a convenient meeting place, being half-way between Caesarea, capital of the Roman ce, and A tioch.

by the proper authorities at each place. Vespasian himself was everywhere, encouraging the active by commendation, urging on the inert by example rather than by reprimand, blind to the faults, rather than to the merits, of his friends.

Some he gratified with Prefectures and Procuratorships; a larger number he promoted to the Senate, being men of distinction who soon rose to the highest places; in some cases good fortune had to take the place of merit. In the matter of a donative to the soldiers, Mucianus had made no great promises in his first speech; and Vespasian himself, who made a firm stand against military largesses—greatly improving his army thereby—gave no more during the Civil War than others had given in times of peace.

Envoys were sent to Parthia and Armenia to make sure that the Legions should not be exposed to attack from the rear when diverted to the Civil War. Titus was to press on the war in Judaea, while Vespasian occupied the Egyptian stronghold;¹ it was thought that a portion of the army under Mucianus, together with the name of Vespasian, would be enough to cope with Vitellius:—*and with Fate nothing was impossible.*² Dispatches were sent to all the armies

Vespasian distributes appointments.

Envoys sent to Parthia and Armenia.

Titus appointed to carry on the Judæan war.

¹ Spooner and other commentators take the words *claustra Aegypti* to refer specially to the two strongholds of Egypt, Alexandria for the sea, and Pelusium for the land. In the passage quoted by Spooner, Hirtius certainly so used the phrase; but it has been shown in a note to Ann. ii. 59 (*eam provinciam claustraque terrae ac maris*), that Tac. uses the phrase not of any particular point or place, but of Egypt as a whole, which from its commanding position 'holds the key' both of the land and of the sea. In the phrases *claustra Aegypti*, '*Aegypti*' is a genitive of definition, Egypt itself being described as *claustra*, as a 'key-holding' country. Similarly in i. 6,

claustra Caspiarum means 'The Caspian Gates'; and in iii. 2, *claustrum montium* is a barrier 'consisting of, formed by, the mountains,' *i.e.* 'a mountain barrier.' Quite different is *Aegyptus claustra annonae* in iii. 8, where the meaning is 'which holds the key of,' or 'commands,' the corn supply; and so Forum Iulii is called *claustra maris*, in iii. 43, because it 'commands the sea.' Similarly *claustra aerarii*, Ann. v. 8. In these cases the Genitive is the Genitive of the object.

² The phrase *ac nihil arduum fatis* may either be explained as a separate sentence, embodying what was in men's minds, or it may be equivalent to an abstract substantive ('the fact that

and their Legates, and instructions were given that bribes should be offered to the Praetorians, now incensed against Vitellius, to resume their military service.

Mucianus sets out with a light force, followed by the 6th legion.

Mucianus set out first, in the style of a colleague, rather than of a servant of the Empire, with a body of light-armed troops. He proceeded rapidly enough not to seem to loiter, yet he did not hurry; knowing that his force was small, and that men believe great things of the absent,¹ he permitted distance to swell his fame. Behind him came a strong column consisting of the 6th Legion, and detachments numbering 13,000 men. The fleet he ordered to come round from Pontus to Byzantium, being in doubt whether he should not leave Moesia on one side, and march direct with his horse and foot for Dyrrhachium, at the same time closing the sea on the Italian side by his ships of war. Achaia and Asia would thus be safe behind him, which Provinces, being without troops, would lie open to Vitellius if not supplied with forces; whereas if Vitellius found that Tarentum and Brundisium, and the whole coasts of Calabria and Lucania, were threatened by a hostile fleet, he would not know which part of Italy to defend.

The fleet is ordered to Byzantium.

Mucianus rigorous in exacting money.

Thus the Provinces rang with the providing of ships, arms, and men; but most burdensome of all was the perquisition of money. Declaring that money were the sinews of civil war, and regardless of law and justice in his exactions, Mucianus looked only to the amount of a man's wealth. Everyone was informed against; every wealthy man was plundered. Oppressive and intolerable methods like these might

nothing was too hard for the fates'), being one of the subjects to *sufficere*. For this construction, see Furneaux's *Annals of Tacitus*, vol. i. Introd. chap.

v. § 55.

¹ The converse of the French proverb, '*Les absents ont toujours tort.*'

be excused by the necessities of war ; but they were continued also in time of peace. For though at the beginning of his reign Vespasian was not very resolute in enforcing harsh practices, prosperity and evil counsellors soon taught him to persevere in them. Mucianus gave of his own wealth also for the war, spending freely out of his private means what his rapacity was to recover from public sources. Others followed his example in giving money ; but few enjoyed the same license of reimbursement.

85 Meanwhile Vespasian's movements were hastened by the ardour with which the Illyrian army embraced his cause. The 3rd Legion¹ set the example to the other Legions of Moesia—the 8th and the 7th (*Claudiana*²)—which were devoted to Otho, though they had not been present at the battle of Bedriacum. These Legions had advanced to Aquileia, where they drove away the messengers who brought the news of Otho's death, and took a hostile attitude, tearing to pieces the standards with the name of Vitellius upon them,³ finally rifling the military chest and dividing its contents among themselves. Alarmed at what they had done, they took counsel from their fears, conceiving that Vespasian might regard as a merit what would have to be pardoned by Vitellius. The three Moesian Legions accordingly sent a letter to win over the Pannonian army, prepared to use force if it held back.

The Illyrian army heartily joins the cause.

In the midst of these alarms, Aponius Saturninus,

In Moesia,
Aponius

¹ This was the legion (*Gallica*) which Vespasian counted upon as his own, having been formerly under his command in Syria. See n. on chap. 74.

² The 7th legion received its title of *Claudiana* for its fidelity to Claudius at the time of the revolt of Furius Camillus Scribonianus recorded by Dio

lv. 23 and lx. 15, and alluded to by Tac. (i. 89 and ii. 75). This legion must be distinguished from the legion of the same number (7th *Galbiana*) called after Galba because raised by him in Spain to resist Nero (i. 6 n., ii. 11 and n.)

³ For this outrage upon the *vexilla* see Suet. Vesp. 6.

attempts to
murder
Tettius
Julianus ;

Julianus
makes his
escape.

The
Pannonian
army is
brought
over by
Antonius
Primus ;

his antece-
dents.

Dalmatia
also comes
over,
chiefly
through the

Governor of Moesia, attempted an atrocious crime. Seeking to gratify a private animosity under pretence of party zeal, he sent a Centurion to murder Tettius Julianus, Legate of the 7th Legion. Informed of his danger, and procuring guides acquainted with the country, Julianus fled through the wilds of Moesia, and across Mount Haemus; after which, making various excuses for delaying his journey to Vespasian, tarrying or hurrying according to the news he received, he took no further part in the Civil War.

In Pannonia, the 13th Legion¹ and the 7th 86
(*Galbiana*) had not forgotten their rage and indignation at the battle of Bedriacum, and came over unhesitatingly to Vespasian under the masterful leadership of Primus Antonius. This man had been tried and found guilty of forgery² in the time of Nero, and—among other evil things of the war—had recovered his senatorial rank. Appointed to the 7th Legion by Galba, he was believed to have written to Otho offering him his services as a General; the offer being slighted, he took no part in the Othonian war, and when the fortunes of Vitellius declined, he joined Vespasian. His accession brought great strength to the cause; for he was a man of great energy, a ready speaker, a master of the art of calumny, and an expert in feuds and factions; as ready to plunder as to squander, a bad citizen in peace, no contemptible ally in war.

The union of the Moesian and Pannonian armies brought over that of Dalmatia without any move on the part of the consular Legates. Pannonia was under

¹ This legion had been sent back to its usual station at Poetovio (*Pettau*) on the Drave, after building the amphitheatres at Cremona and Bologna (chap. 67).

² How Antonius had joined in a conspiracy to alter a will forged by Valerius Fabianus is told in Ann. xiv. 40.

Tampius Flavianus, Dalmatia under Pompeius Silvanus,¹ two old and wealthy men; but Cornelius Fuscus² the Procurator was young and active, and of illustrious birth. In early youth love of gain³ had induced him to give up his senatorial rank; he had taken a leading part for Galba in his native Colony, and thereby gained a Procuratorship. He now espoused the cause of Vespasian, and became a very fire-brand of war, revelling in its dangers rather than in its prizes, and preferring what was novel, dubious, and hazardous, to the security of long-enjoyed advantages.

exertions
of the
procurator
Cornelius
Fuscus.

And so these two men, Antonius and Fuscus, probed and raked up every weak spot⁴ throughout the Empire; they wrote to the 14th Legion in Britain, and to the 1st in Spain, because both of those Legions had fought for Otho against Vitellius; they distributed letters throughout Gaul, and in one moment a mighty war blazed up, the Illyrian armies being in open revolt, the rest waiting on events to do the same.

Activity of
Antonius
and Fuscus
in stirring
up dis-
affection.

¹ This man had been accused of extortion after his proconsulship in Africa and acquitted by Nero in A.D. 58; but Tac. evidently regarded him as guilty, as he adds the comment *valuit pecuniosa orbitate et senecta* (Ann. xiii. 52).

² Cornelius Fuscus was procurator of Pannonia; he was afterwards *praefectus praetorio* under Domitian.

³ M here reads *quietis cupidine*; but as this seems inconsistent with what is said below of the restless temper of this man, Grotius conj. *quaestus cupidine*: while Meiser, more probably, suggests *inquietis cupidine*. F. follows M. In support of *quaestus* Mr. Fyfe well quotes Ann. xvi. 17, where Tac. tells us that Annaeus Mela abstained from seeking public office because 'he hoped to find a shorter road to wealth' by entering (as Fuscus did) the imperial civil service.

⁴ The phrase *quidquid usquam aegrum foret* is the exact converse of the phrase *quid in toto terrarum orbe validum* in i. 4, 3, denoting respectively the weak points, and the strong points, of the Empire or the Imperial system. In the present passage the *quidquid aegrum* does not refer to Imperial interests as a whole, but to the weak points on the side of Vitellius—every point of disorganisation or disaffection which might be turned to advantage against him. This is at once illustrated by the words which follow. Comparing the words *quidquid usquam aegrum foret* with the verbs *movere et quaterere*, one would be tempted to regard the metaphor as a surgical one. Instead of being allowed to rest and heal, the 'sore places' of the Empire were kept open and irritated by the letters of the Flavian leaders.

Vitellius buried in sloth, at the head of a demoralised army of 60,000 men.

While Vespasian and his Generals were thus occupied in the Provinces, Vitellius was becoming more despicable and more slothful every day. Tarrying to enjoy the pleasures of every town and every villa on his way, he proceeded towards Rome at the head of a burdensome and demoralised host of 60,000 armed men.¹ The number of camp followers² was greater still—and no slaves are so contumacious as the attendants on an army—while in his train was a huge company of Legates and of followers that not even the sternest discipline could have kept in order. Crowds of Senators and Knights flocking out to meet him from the city added to the mob, some brought by fear, others coming by way of flattery, till by degrees everybody came out: each afraid, as the others departed, that he might be the only one left behind. Among the rest were men of the plebs known to Vitellius for the basest of ministrations—buffoons, actors, and charioteers—in whose discreditable friendship he took strange delight. And not only were the Colonies and Municipal towns ransacked to furnish supplies, but even the husbandmen were despoiled, and the fields, now ripe for harvest, were devastated as in a hostile country.

Affrays among the soldiers;

There were also many sanguinary affrays among the soldiers, the Legions and the auxiliaries having

¹ Spooner explains the number 60,000 as follows:—

'Valens was at the head of 40,000 men when he started on his march, Caecina of 30,000. Vitellius' own army can hardly have amounted to less than 40,000: this would make a total of 110,000 in all. But a good many had fallen in the fighting round Bedriacum; the 14th legion and the Batavian cohorts had been sent home, as well as the Gaulish auxiliaries; and Vitellius had been lavish in granting discharges. In these ways the 110,000

had been diminished to 60,000.' But we have no definite information as to the number of the army with Vitellius, and it can scarcely have reached so great a figure as 40,000; and as to the discharges, it does not appear that they were granted before Vitellius reached Rome.

² The *lixæ* who carried on the petty trade of the camp were free: the *calones* were soldier-servants and slaves. *Inter servos* therefore must mean 'even if compared with slaves.'

kept up their quarrel ever since the riot at Ticinum, though both would join together when they had to fight the country-people. The greatest bloodshed occurred at the 7th milestone from Rome. Vitellius was distributing to the soldiers individually rations of cooked food, like those served at the messes of gladiators. The mob from the city was swarming through the camp, when some of their number, with town-bred wit,¹ taking the soldiers unawares, cut off their belts, and then asked them, *Where were their arms?* Unused to insult, the soldiers could not brook the jest, and fell upon the unarmed multitude with their swords. Among the victims was the father of one of the soldiers, who was in his son's company; when the man was recognised, and his death became known, the slaughter of unoffending persons ceased.

terrible
massacre
7 miles out-
side Rome.

Inside the city, much terror was caused by soldiers running promiscuously ahead, making mostly for the Forum, in their desire to see the spot where Galba fell. No less savage was the appearance of the men themselves, with their hides of wild beasts and enormous spears. Unused to crowds, they took no pains to avoid them; if they fell upon the slippery pavement, or jostled against anybody, they would begin with abuse, and then pass on to blows, or even use their swords. The Tribunes and the Prefects, flitting about with armed bands, added to the general alarm.

Alarm
caused in
the city by
the savage
German
soldiers.

89 Vitellius himself approached Rome from the Mulvian Bridge,² mounted on a splendid charger,

Entry of
Vitellius
into Rome.

¹ Some would take *vernacula* in the sense of 'childish'; but the ironical use of *urbanitas* shows that Tac. is referring to the impudent manners of a town-bred mob. So in iii. 32, in reference to the manner in which the populace of Cremona jeered at the

soldiers who were building the amphitheatre, Tac. adds *ut sunt procacia urbanae plebis ingenia*.

² The famous *Ponte Molle*, two miles outside Rome on the great Flaminian Road to the north. On crossing the bridge, and up to the pomerium,

driving Senate and people before him. He was fully armed, and wore his General's cloak; but his friends dissuading him from entering the city as a conqueror, he assumed the *toga praetexta*¹ and entered the city in orderly array. In front were the eagles of the four Legions,² surrounded by a like number of standards from other Legions;³ then came twelve standards of auxiliary cavalry. After the foot came the horse; after them thirty-four cohorts of auxiliary infantry, arranged according to nationality and the style of arms which they bore. The Camp-Prefects, the Tribunes, and the principal Centurions⁴ in white uniform, marched in front of the eagles, the other Centurions each by the side of their centuries, ablaze with arms and decorations; the soldiers glittered with their chains and bosses. It was a splendid show: such an army deserved another Emperor than Vitellius. Entering the Capitol in this order, he there embraced his mother, and dignified her with the title of 'Augusta.'

He addresses the Senate and the people.

Next day he addressed the Senate and the people 90 as though they were those of some foreign country, speaking grandiloquently about himself, and praising up his own diligence and moderation, though his

Vitellius wore his military dress; he then changed it. Not noticing this distinction, Suet. makes him enter the city in military dress: but the accuracy of Tac. is shown by two coins, one of which represents Vitellius entering the city as a soldier, the other as a civilian.

¹ The *toga praetexta* was the civilian robe of state worn by the consuls and higher magistrates, as well as by Emperors; the *paludamentum* was the military cloak worn by generals.

² The four complete legions, each with its eagle, were the 1st (*Italica*), the 5th (*Alauda*), the 21st (*Rapax*), and the 22nd (*Primigenia*). Of these the

5th and the 1st (picked up at Lyons) had formed part of the army of Valens, the 21st of that of Caecina. The 22nd seems to have come on with Vitellius; it formed part of Caecina's army when he marched out from Rome to meet Vespasian later on (ii. 100).

³ These detachments were of the 1st (*Germanica*), the 4th (*Macedonica*), the 15th (*Primigenia*), and the 16th (*Gallica*). See ii. 100, iii. 22.

⁴ Each cohort contained three maniples, each maniple two centuries, one of which was called *prior*, the other *posterior*. The *primi centurionum* here mentioned would thus be the *prior* centurions of the leading maniples.

audience had knowledge of his infamies, and all Italy had witnessed the lethargy and extravagance which had disgraced his progress. Yet the heedless mob, without sense of false or true, and well-trained in the usual flatteries, raised shouts of clamorous applause; and when Vitellius declined the title of 'Augustus,' they extorted from him a consent which was as idle as had been his refusal of it.¹

91 In a city that finds a meaning in everything, it was regarded as a sinister omen that Vitellius, on assuming the office of Pontifex Maximus, issued an edict in regard to public ceremonies upon the 18th of July, a day rendered inauspicious from of old by the disasters of the Cremera² and the Allia: so ignorant was he of all lore, human or divine, and so like-minded in dulness were his friends and freedmen, that he seemed to be living in a company of drunken men. Yet he attended at the Consular elections³ along with the candidates like a private citizen, and he courted in every way the favour of the rabble by attending the theatre, and by taking part in the factions of the Circus. Welcome and popular as such things would have been had they been the outcome of virtue, the recollection of the Emperor's

He issues a priestly edict on the ill-omened 18th of July.

He courts favour by attending at elections, in the Circus, and in the theatre.

¹ The meaning is that the reign of Vitellius was so short and so insignificant, that it mattered not whether he accepted titles or refused them. Nothing came of it in either case.

² The battle of the Cremera, when the Fabii were destroyed, was fought in B.C. 477; that of the Allia, which opened up Rome to the Gauls, in B.C. 390. As the day was known in the calendar as *dies Alliensis*, on which no public or private business could be transacted (as particularly recorded by Liv. vi. 1), it showed extraordinary *socordia* on the part of Vitellius and his friends to disregard it.

³ The *comitia* here referred to must have been those for the special appoint-

ment of consuls for the later months of the year (chap. 71). The regular appointments for the ensuing year were made in the month of November. In the case of the consulship, the Emperors preferred only to exercise the right of *nominatio* (the right to pronounce upon the qualifications of candidates), not of *commendatio* (see n. on Ann. i. 14); but following the example of Augustus, they would go down into the Campus Martius on the election day and go through the form of canvassing, just as if the election were still free. After the election, the *renuntiatio*, or announcement of the successful names, took place with the same forms as in the days of the Republic.

past life made them seem undignified and contemptible.

Opposition of Helvidius Priscus.

He would attend the Senate even when trivial matters were under consideration. On one occasion he was opposed by Priscus Helvidius, Praetor Designate.¹ Though taken aback at first, he only appealed to the Tribunes of the Plebs to support his slighted authority; and afterwards, when his friends, fearing some deeper resentment, sought to calm him down, he replied that, *It was no new thing for two Senators to differ on public questions; he himself had often opposed Thræsea.*

Many smiled at the effrontery of this comparison; others were pleased that he had selected Thræsea, rather than one of the great men of the day, as an example of true glory.

Jealousy between Valens and Caecina, who govern the Empire between them.

Vitellius bestowed the command of the Praetorian Guards upon Publius Sabinus, who had been Prefect of a cohort, and Julius Priscus, a Centurion—the latter owing his advancement to Valens, the former to Caecina. For these two men governed the Empire between them, their quarrels leaving no room for the Emperor's authority. They had long hated each other; ill concealed in camp and field, that hatred was now fanned by evil counsels of friends, and by a society fertile in the creation of animosities. They vied with and contended against each other in the numbers courting and waiting upon them, 92

¹ Helvidius Priscus had been banished at the time when his father-in-law Paetus Thræsea had been ordered to die by Nero (Ann. xvi. 33-35). These are the two great heroes of Tacitus, as specimens of Stoical virtue and republican independence. Helvidius had been recalled from banishment by Galba, and designated as praetor. Though he exhibited some caution in his attitude towards

the government (iv. 4), his sturdy independence became too much for Vespasian, who ultimately ordered his death about the year A.D. 73 or 74 (Suet. Vesp. 15). Tac. gives a noble description of his character in iv. 5 (*civis, senator, maritus, gener, amicus, cunctis vitae officiis aequabilis, opum contemtor, recti pervicax, constans adversus metus*).

and in the vast scale of their receptions; while Vitellius, inclining now to the one, and now to the other—for there is no trusting men possessed of inordinate power—quick to take offence, and no less readily pacified by some ill-timed compliment,¹ moved alike their terror and contempt. But this put no check upon their appropriating palaces and gardens and all the wealth of the Empire, while the crowd of unhappy impoverished nobles whom Galba had restored from exile with their children received neither help nor compassion at his hands.²

One boon he granted to these distinguished men of which even the populace approved: he restored to the returned exiles their rights over their freedmen. And yet the freedmen, with slave-like cunning, rendered these rights nugatory by every means in their power, hiding away their money, or depositing it with influential personages. Some of them passed over to the household of the Emperor, where they became more powerful than their patrons.

Boon to returned exiles.

93 The camp being now full, the overflowing multitude of soldiers distributed themselves about the temples and porticoes of the entire city, recognising no headquarters, doing no sentry duty nor any invigorating work, weakening alike their bodies and their minds by indulgence in all the pleasures and unmentionable vices of the city. Nor had they even any regard for their health. A number of them took up

Demoralisation of the army.

¹ What Tac. means is that Vitellius might be pleased and his anger appeased by some bit of flattery, however ill-judged, out-of-place, or inappropriate it might be.

² These were the nobles whom Galba had recalled from exile, and whom Otho had vainly attempted to assist (i. 90).

Freedmen were bound to assist their patrons when in difficulties, but the obligation was not easily enforced. It is curious to see how Tac.'s sympathies are always with nobles, even the *stabilis et egens nobilium turba* on whom he here wastes his compassion.

their quarters in the pestilential region of the Vatican,¹ where multitudes of the common soldiers perished; for the Gauls and the Germans succumbed readily to disease, and what with their craving for water and intolerance of thirst, the proximity of the Tiber proved fatal to them.

Besides all this, corruption and favouritism threw the whole service into confusion. Sixteen Praetorian² and four Urban Cohorts were raised, each to be a thousand strong. In conducting this levy Valens took the leading part, on the assumption that it was he who had rescued Caecina. It certainly was his arrival which had given the party its strength, and his victory dispelled the sinister rumours which had been created by his slow advance. The whole army indeed of Lower Germany was attached to him—which fact, it is believed, first made Caecina waver in his allegiance to Vitellius.

Whatever indulgences Vitellius granted to his 94
Generals, he permitted still greater license to his men. Every man chose his own service for himself; however unfit he might be, he might enrol in one of the City Corps if he wished, while good men were permitted to remain in a Legion, or in the auxiliary cavalry, if they so desired. And there were many who did so

Sixteen
new
Praetorian
Cohorts
raised.

The men
hmmoured
in every-
thing.

¹ That is, on the right bank of the Tiber. The low ground under the Vatican and the Janiculum has always been considered more unhealthy than the open ground upon the left bank. Whether Tac. means that the Germans suffered from too much bathing in the Tiber, or too much drinking of it, is not apparent. Probably the latter.

² The number of Praetorian Cohorts since the time of Augustus had remained at nine (Ann. iv. 5); and Vespasian again reduced them to the same number. We are informed in the next chap. that Vitellius allowed his soldiers to choose their own form of service, whether

among the Praetorians, the legionaries, or the auxiliaries; it seems probable therefore that the sudden increase in the number of the Praetorians was due to the excessive number volunteering for that service. One main factor in the recent war had been jealousy of the Praetorians felt by the legions; nothing therefore more likely than that men belonging to the latter should desire to possess the privileges of the former. Tac. expressly states in the next chap. that the legions were weakened to make up the number of the urban troops.

desire—men who had suffered from sickness and who complained of the unhealthiness of the city. Nevertheless the best men were withdrawn from the Legions and the auxiliary cavalry; while the prestige of the Praetorians was destroyed, since the 20,000 formed a medley, rather than a selection,¹ from the entire army.

While Vitellius was delivering an harangue, a demand was made for the execution of the Gallic chiefs, Asiaticus, Flavus, and Rufinus, because they had taken up arms for Vindex. He made no attempt to check these cries. Cowardly by nature, he also knew that the question of a donative lay before him, and that, being short of money, he must indulge his soldiers in all other things.

The Imperial freedmen² were ordered to contribute a kind of war-tax³ in proportion to the number of their slaves; but Vitellius himself thought of nothing but how to squander, building stables for his charioteers, filling the Circus with shows of gladiators or wild beasts, and fooling away money as though his supply of it were inexhaustible.

95 The birthday of Vitellius was celebrated by Caecina and Valens with a display of gladiators in every quarter of the city on a scale of unparalleled magnificence; and Vitellius delighted the rabble, as much as he outraged all good citizens, by

Extravagance of Vitellius.

Altars set up to Nero, with funeral offerings.

¹ The words *permixtis magis quam electis* show that the Praetorians were regarded as a picked body of troops.

² The freedmen of the Imperial household, called here *liberti principum*, more usually *liberti Caesaris* (Ann. xiii. 47), passed in a body from one Emperor's service to that of another. They performed all the private services of the Imperial Court and household. Vitellius was the first to employ Roman knights for these services (i. 58), from

which beginning a kind of regular Civil Service was gradually formed, drawn from the class of equites. See n. on Ann. iv. 6.

³ The *tributum* was a war-tax, levied only on property; so when Vitellius raised this levy on the property of his freedmen, to be spent solely on purposes of enjoyment, Tac. describes it ironically as a *tributum*: a kind of war-tax to be wasted in extravagance.

setting up altars in the Campus Martius on which funeral offerings were made to Nero.¹ Victims were slain and burnt as for a public sacrifice, the pyres being lighted by the Augustales—a priesthood dedicated to the Julian family by Tiberius² after the fashion of that founded by Romulus for King Tatius.

Though not four months had yet elapsed since the victory of Bedriacum, the name of the Emperor's freedman Asiaticus had become as odious as those of Polyclitus, Patrobius,³ and other detestable persons in former times. No one in that court sought advancement by integrity or by diligence: the one road to influence was to provide sumptuous banquets, and to glut the insatiable appetite of Vitellius with costly delicacies. Content to enjoy the present, without a thought for the future, he is believed, in the course of a few months, to have squandered a sum of nine hundred million sesterces.⁴ O mighty and most unhappy country! to have endured, in one year, an Otho and a Vitellius;⁵ to have experienced the successive turpitudes of a Vinus, a Fabius, an Icelus and an Asiaticus, to be followed by a Mucianus and a Marcellus⁶—other men rather than other manners.

The first defection to be announced to Vitellius 96 was that of the 3rd Legion. The news came in a

Extrava-
gant
gluttony
of Vitellius.

News
arrives that
the 3rd

¹ Suet. says this act was regarded as an avowal that Vitellius meant to take Nero as a pattern (Vit. 11).

² The institution of this important priesthood in A.D. 14 is described in Ann. ii. 54. The College as then instituted consisted of 21 men chosen by lot *e primoribus civitatis*, and 4 members of the Imperial family.

³ Polyclitus was the arrogant freedman dispatched by Nero in A.D. 61 to compose differences in the province of Britain (Ann. xiv. 39). Patrobius is mentioned in i. 49 as a freedman of Nero's put to death by Galba.

⁴ If we count the sesterce as equivalent to our twopence, that would amount to $7\frac{1}{2}$ millions of our money.

⁵ Tac. arranges his examples in four pairs. First come the two Emperors; next two important counsellors and generals of Galba and Vitellius respectively; then the two favourite freedmen—Galba's freedman Icelus, put to death by Otho (i. 46), and Asiaticus; and last, Mucianus and Marcellus.

⁶ This was the famous (according to Tacitus the infamous) informer T. Clodius Eprinus Marcellus; see nn. on chaps. 10 and 53.

letter from Aponius Saturninus,¹ before that officer had himself gone over to Vespasian. But Aponius, in the flurry of the moment, had not told the whole story; and flattering friends made little of the affair, assuring Vitellius that, *It was only the revolt of a single Legion; the other armies were firm in their allegiance.* Vitellius addressed the soldiers to the same effect, accusing the newly discharged² Praetorians of having spread false reports, and asserting that there was no danger of civil war. Vespasian's name he never mentioned; but he did his best to give alimnt to rumours by dispersing soldiers about the city to prevent the people from repeating them.

legion has revolted.

97 Nevertheless he called up auxiliaries from Germany,³ Britain, and Spain, though but tardily, and without acknowledging the necessity. Not less tardy were the Legates and the Provinces in their response. Hordeonius Flaccus⁴ was distrustful of the Batavians, fearing that he might have a war of his own upon his hands; Britain had not yet settled down under Vettius Bolanus;⁵ and neither General was of assured loyalty. Spain showed no alacrity, having no Consular at the moment;⁶ the Legates of the three Legions,⁷ who were equal in rank, and who would have vied with one another in bowing down to Vitellius in prosperity, all alike fought shy of his falling fortunes.

Auxiliaries called up from the provinces; the call is but tardily responded to.

¹ Governor of Moesia; see chap. 85, i. 79, iii. 5, 9-11 and nn.

² According to the policy of Vitellius, chap. 67.

³ Here as elsewhere the term *Germania* stands for the two Roman provinces of Upper and Lower Germany—not for Germany as a whole.

⁴ For the character of Hordeonius Flaccus see i. 9; when setting out for Italy, Vitellius had given him the charge

of the Rhine bank (chap. 57).

⁵ Appointed by Vitellius to succeed Trebellius as governor of Britain (chap. 65).

⁶ The governor Cluvius Rufus having left his province to meet Vitellius at Lyons, and now governing his province from Rome (chap. 65).

⁷ The three Spanish legions were the 6th (*Victrix*), the 10th (*Gemina*) and the 1st (*Adiutrix*).

Africa
alone is
eager.

In Africa, the Legion¹ and the cohorts which had been raised by Clodius Macer, and afterwards disbanded by Galba, took up arms again at the order of Vitellius, and the young men throughout the Province eagerly gave in their names. For Vitellius had won himself a good name during his Proconsulate by his just government, whereas that of Vespasian had been ill-famed and odious.² Our allies augured accordingly how each would turn out when he became Emperor; but the event falsified their expectations.

The Legate Valerius Festus³ at first honestly 98
seconded the wishes of the provincials; but after a time he wavered, supporting Vitellius openly in his dispatches and edicts, but Vespasian in his private correspondence—ready to espouse whichever cause prevailed.

A party
of Vespasian's
emissaries
are
captured;

A party of soldiers and Centurions who had been sent as emissaries to Raetia and Gaul with letters and edicts from Vespasian having been surprised, some of them were taken to Vitellius and put to death; but a number escaped detection, concealed by the loyalty of friends or their own adroitness. In this way the plans of Vitellius became known, but not so for the most part those of Vespasian: at first because of the supineness of the former, and afterwards because news was blocked by troops posted on the Pannonian Alps.⁴ The Etesian winds⁵ also were favourable to those

but
Vitellius
learns little
of his plans.

¹ The 3rd (*Augusta*); see i. 11.

² One of the very few passages where the evidence of Tac. is contradicted. Suet. says of Vespasian, *Africam integerrime nec sine magna dignatione administravit* (Vesp. 4). The judgment of Tac. is doubtless to be preferred.

³ Commander of the 3rd legion. He was a relative of Vitellius.

⁴ These are the mountains which

shut in Italy on the NE., through which ran the pass from Aquileia to Poetovio (*Pettau*) on the upper waters of the Drave, the headquarters of the Pannonian army.

⁵ The NW. wind (see Caesar, Bell. Civ. iii. 107) prevails in the Eastern Mediterranean for a month or so from about the 20th of July.

voyaging to the East by sea, but adverse to those coming from it.

99 Terrified at length by the alarming news of invasion¹ coming in from every quarter, Vitellius ordered Valens and Caecina to take the field. Caecina was sent on in advance;² Valens was detained by a severe illness from which he was only just recovering. The appearance of the German army was greatly changed as it now left the city. The men were weak and spiritless, their march slow and straggling, their horses out of condition, and their arms almost falling out of their hands. Impatient of sun, dust, and bad weather, they were all the more ready for mutiny that they were unwilling to endure fatigue. Caecina too, self-seeking as ever, had become lethargic in his new prosperity, and enervated by self-indulgence: perhaps he already had treachery in his mind, and was deliberately scheming to impair the efficiency of the army. Many thought that he had been shaken by the counsels of Flavius Sabinus,³ who using Rubrius Gallus⁴ as an intermediary had assured him that Vespasian would agree to terms for his defection. He was reminded also of his hatred and jealousy of Fabius Valens:—*Outstripped in the favour of Vitellius, let him secure influence and authority with a new Emperor.*

Caecina and Valens ordered to take the field.

Changed appearance of the German army.

100 Having been embraced by Vitellius, and leaving Rome with every mark of distinction, Caecina sent on part of his cavalry to occupy Cremona. Soon after him followed detachments of the 1st, 4th, 15th,

List of Caecina's forces. He sends on cavalry to Cremona;

¹ Orelli's explanation of the words *inruptione hostium* as an Ablative of time is quite inadmissible. As no forward movement into Italy had yet been made, the words can only be explained of the fears and expectations of invasion raised by the reports coming

to hand.

² Caecina did not leave Rome till the beginning of October.

³ This was Vespasian's elder brother, now *praefectus urbi* (chap. 55).

⁴ Late commander of the Othonian troops at Brixellum (chap. 51).

and 16th Legions; then came the 5th and the 22nd Legions; last of all the 21st (*Rapax*), and the 1st (*Italica*), together with detachments of the three British Legions, and a picked body of auxiliaries.¹

After the departure of Caecina, Fabius Valens wrote to the army which had been under his own command² to wait for him on the road, *as had been arranged*—so he said—*with Caecina*. But Caecina, having the advantage of being on the spot, pretended that this plan had been changed in order to meet the coming war with their entire strength. He ordered therefore the Legions to hurry on to Cremona, while part of the army was to make for Hostilia.³ He himself turned aside to Ravenna on the pretence of addressing the fleet; but soon afterwards contrived a secret interview at Padua to arrange for its defection. For Lucilius Bassus, who had been promoted by Vitellius from the command of a wing of cavalry to that of the fleets at Ravenna and Misenum, and was unreasonably enraged at not having been at once appointed to the Praetorian command, was now seeking his revenge by an act of shameful perfidy. Whether it was he who brought over Caecina, or whether, through a likeness of nature common to bad men, both were

and takes on the troops of Valens along with his own.

He plans treachery with Lucilius Bassus, commander of the fleet.

¹ These are the legions mentioned as having entered the city with Vitellius in chap. 89; the 1st, 4th, 15th, and 16th being represented by detachments, the 1st (*Italica*), 5th, 21st, and 22nd being entire legions, each with its eagle. The British *vexillarii* no doubt included the 8000 men attached to Vitellius from the three British legions (chap. 57).

² It will be remembered that the two entire legions which marched under Valens were the 5th (*Alauda*) with the 1st (*Italica*) which he took on from Lyons. The 21st (*Rapax*) had marched as a whole with Caecina.

³ The legions sent on to Cremona, as stated in iii. 14, were the 21st (*Rapax*) and the 1st (*Italica*). As no enemy was to be expected at that time at Cremona, it would seem as if Caecina, meditating treachery, had purposely divided his forces. At any rate his sending them there was in direct violation of his excuse for taking on the troops of Valens (*ut ingruenti bello tota mole occurreretur*). The larger part of the army proceeded to Hostilia, leaving the Via Aemilia at Mutina, to await, or to anticipate, an invading force coming from Aquileia and Verona.

impelled by the same evil motives, it is impossible to determine.

101 The authors of the time, writing the history of this war during the sovereignty of the Flavian family, have assigned to the motives of these men the false and flattering terms of patriotism and love of peace. But for my own part, to say nothing of their natural levity of character, or of the worthlessness of a loyalty¹ which had already betrayed Galba, I believe that it was from feelings of rivalry and jealousy that they overthrew Vitellius, fearing that they might be outstripped by others in his favour.

No patriotic motives can be attributed to either of them.

As soon as Caecina came up with the Legions, he used all his arts to undermine the determined devotion of the Centurions and soldiers to Vitellius. Bassus had less difficulty in making the same attempt with the sailors; the recollection that they had fought recently for Otho made them unstable in their allegiance and ready for a change.

Caecina does what he can to undermine the loyalty of the soldiers.

¹ The position of *max* (*prodito Galba vilem max fidem*) is emphatic. As they had once betrayed their Emperor, their

loyalty after that (*max*) was *vilis*, i.e. it was of no value, it could not be reckoned on.

BOOK III

Council of war held by the Flavian leaders at Poetovio.

WITH better fortune and fidelity were the Flavian leaders making their plans for war. They met at Poetovio,¹ the winter-quarters of the 13th Legion, where they considered whether to block the Pannonian passes until their whole forces should come up from behind, or to grapple at once with the enemy and fight for Italy. Those who desired to await reinforcements and spin out the war dwelt on the strength and reputation of the German army, to which had afterwards been added the flower of the British army² arriving with Vitellius :—

Some advocate delay ;

Their own numbers, they urged, were not equal to those of the Legions which had lately been defeated ; and though the defeated men spoke boldly enough, their courage was not what it had been. If in the meantime they beset the Alps, Mucianus would come up with the forces of the East ; Vespasian would still have with him the sea and the fleets and the good will of the Provinces—enough to set a whole new war agoing. A salutary delay would thus give them fresh strength, without the loss of any that they had already.

¹ Poetovio, the modern *Pettau*, on the upper waters of the Drave, was the headquarters of the Pannonian army. The 13th (*Gemina*) was the only legion of the Danubian army which had been present at Bedriacum as a whole. After that battle it had been ordered, as a kind of punishment, to build amphitheatres at Cremona and Bononia.

Jeered at for their pains by the populace of Cremona, they had been sent back sore and sullen to their usual quarters in Pannonia.

² The 8000 British troops attached to Vitellius. *Mox* refers to the fact that this force had arrived after the German legions.

2 To these arguments Antonius Primus,¹ who was the keenest advocate of war, replied:—

Antonius Primus urges immediate action.

Immediate action would be of advantage to themselves, and fatal to Vitellius. The victors had gained more in lethargy than in confidence. They had not been kept in camps and ready for war; they had been loitering about all the towns of Italy, a terror only to their hosts, drinking in unaccustomed pleasures with a zest proportionate to their previous barbarity. They had been enfeebled by disease, or enervated by the Circus, the theatre, and the other attractions of the city: give them time to prepare² for war, and even these men would recover their robustness. Germany, whence they drew their strength, was not far off; Britain was separated only by a strait; the Provinces of Gaul and Spain were on either side, both ready to supply them with men, horses, and tribute. Italy itself, and the wealth of the city, were in their hands; and if they resolved to take the offensive, they had two fleets, with the Illyrian Sea lying open before them.

Of what use would the mountain passes be then? Of what use to drag on the war for another year? Whence would they get money and supplies in the meantime?³ No! let them rather make use of the fact that the Pannonian Legions—tricked rather than defeated at Bedriacum⁴—were up and hurrying for revenge, and that the Moesian armies were joining them with their entire strength. If numbers were to be counted by men and

¹ Antonius was legate of the 7th legion (*Galbiana*). For his character and career see ii. 86.

² The phrase *meditatione belli* is well illustrated by a passage in iv. 26: *ibi struenda acie, muniendo vallandoque et ceteris belli meditentis militem firmabant.*

³ In this passage, as in ii. 83, where the possibilities open to Mucianus in his march from the East are discussed, Tac. shows himself quite alive to the

larger strategic considerations by which the action of the Flavian commanders had to be determined in their projected invasion of Italy.

On the phrase *claustra montium* see n. on ii. 82.

⁴ Referring to the incident during the battle of Bedriacum when a false rumour of a defection in the Vitellian army caused the Othonians to desist from fighting (ii. 42).

not by Legions, theirs was the stronger force, and it was free from insubordination: their very shame had been a help to discipline. Their horse, even at Bedriacum, had not been defeated;¹ they had routed the Vitellians under the most adverse circumstances.

'On that occasion,' he continued, 'two wings² of Pannonian and Moesian horse broke through the enemy's ranks: we now have a combined force of sixteen wings, which with the shock and roar and hurricane of their onset will envelop and overwhelm horses and horsemen that have forgotten how to fight. If no one holds me back, I will carry out my own plan myself. Do you, whose fortunes are before you, keep in your Legions; a few light-armed cohorts will be enough for me. And when you hear that Italy has been opened up, and the power of Vitellius shaken, you will rejoice to follow, and to tread in my victorious footsteps.'³

He carries
the meeting
with him.

Bellowing forth words like these with his eyes aflame, and in a stentorian voice so as to be heard

¹ The allusion is to the cavalry combat with which the battle of Bedriacum opened, when the Othonian cavalry repulsed the charge of the Vitellians. On what ground Antonius could assert that the Othonian force on that occasion consisted of the 'Pannonian and Moesian squadrons' we do not know. There was no Moesian legion present at that battle, and only one Pannonian legion (the 13th); Tac. simply calls the repelling force 'Othonian,' probably meaning thereby the small cavalry force attached to the Praetorians. Antonius perhaps spoke rhetorically, to rouse the enthusiasm of the men whom he was addressing.

² The word 'squadron' imperfectly represents the Latin *ala*, which might number from 500 to 1000 men. We have no corresponding term in English. The word 'regiment' is not an appropriate word to use for any unit in the Roman army.

³ Antonius was only legate of a legion; and, as we must suppose that the Moesian and Dalmatian armies, as

well as the Pannonian, were represented at the council at Poetovio, the commanders of those armies would naturally have had the decisive voice in the deliberations. The governor of Dalmatia was Pompeius Silvanus, who now had only one legion under him (the 11th *Claudia*), the 14th having been sent to Britain. He was lukewarm in the cause (chap. 50), and was not present at the council; the governor of Moesia, Aponius Saturninus, was also not present (chap. 5); while Tampius Flavianus, governor of Pannonia (*natura et senecta cunctator*, chap. 4) was suspected of Vitellian sympathies, and had no authority with his troops. The three governors being thus out of the way, Antonius carried all before him. The whole movement in the Danubian armies—indeed all the movements during the civil war—were soldiers' movements. It was the legions of Moesia, not the generals, that wrote to the Pannonian army urging it to revolt (ii. 85).

the further—for the Centurions and some soldiers had pushed their way into the Council¹—Antonius made an impression even upon the cautious and far-seeing; while the rest of the crowd, sneering at the others for their timidity, hailed him as the one man and General among them. This reputation he had gained for himself at the first assembly, when the letter from Vespasian was read;² on which occasion he had used no ambiguous language like the others, to be turned³ this way or that afterwards, and interpreted as expediency might suggest: men felt that he had openly committed himself to the cause, and he carried therefore all the greater weight with the soldiers whose guilt or glory he was to share.

4 Next in influence to Antonius came Cornelius Fuscus,⁴ the Procurator. This man also had used such uncompromising language about Vitellius that he had left himself no hope should things go badly with the cause. The Legate Tampius Flavianus, being slow alike from temperament and from years, provoked a suspicion among the soldiers that he was not un-mindful of his connexion with Vitellius;⁵ the fact also that he had fled when the movement in the Legions began, and then voluntarily returned, suggested that he had been looking for some opportunity for

The procurator Cornelius Fuscus backs him up.

Suspicious about the legate Flavianus.

¹ It would appear that at a council of war only the tribunes, and perhaps the chief centurions (*centuriones primi pilii*), were admitted. The presence of private soldiers here is evidently meant as an indication of the general want of discipline prevailing in the army at this time.

² Another loose practice already noticed during this war (see also chap. 9, and iv. 25) was that of a general reading aloud to his men the dispatches he received with a view to exciting their feelings. In ii. 82, we learn that letters were written in the name of Mucianus

and Vespasian *ad omnes exercitus legatosque*.

³ Spooner translates *tracturus* here 'resolved to torture them (*i.e.* the interpretations) into this or that sense.' Surely the introduction of this modern idea is out of place. *Traho* refers merely to the drawing of an inference, as in the well-known passage of Horace, *exemplo trahentis = Perniciem veniens ad aevum* (Od. iii. 5, 15).

⁴ For the restless, fiery character of Cornelius Fuscus see ii. 86.

⁵ What the affinity between Tampius and Vitellius was is not known.

treachery. For he had left his Province for Italy, and was out of harm's way, when a spirit of restlessness prompted him to resume the title of Legate and throw himself into the civil conflict. To this he had been urged by Cornelius Fuscus; not that the latter had any need for his assistance, but he thought that at the moment when the party was raising its head, the name of a Consular might give it an air of distinction.

That the move into Italy might be made securely and successfully, orders were sent to Aponius Saturninus¹ to hurry on with the Moesian army; while to save the Provinces from being exposed defenceless to the barbarian tribes of Sarmatia, the chiefs who govern the Sarmatian Iazyges² were invited to join in the campaign. These men offered to bring out their people also, with a strong body of horse, in which their whole strength consists; but the offer was declined from a fear that amid the general discord the tribe might take some hostile course, or be tempted to violate all right and duty by offers of higher pay from the other side. The Suebian Kings Sido and Italicus³ were brought over to the cause; that people had long been submissive to Rome, always loyal though not always under control.⁴

As Raetia was hostile in consequence of the inflexible loyalty to Vitellius of the Procurator Porcius

¹ The governor of Moesia and the conqueror of the Rhoxolani (i. 79). His attempt to murder the legate of the 7th legion is related in ii. 85. He had hesitated at first to come over to Vespasian (ii. 96).

² This tribe lay to the E. of the province of Pannonia, between the Danube and the Theiss. Their strength in cavalry is mentioned in Ann. xii. 29.

³ For the dealings of Rome with the Suebi or Suevi (a collective name given to the German tribes between the

Danube and the Baltic), see Ann. ii. 45, 46, and 63. Vannius had been imposed as king upon the Suebians by Drusus, son of Tiberius; he was expelled by Vangio and Sido, sons of a sister of Vannius. Rome interfered no more. Italicus is supposed to have been the successor, possibly the son, of Vangio.

⁴ The reading of M here (*fidei commissior patientior*) is unmeaning. The text follows the dubious conj. of Scheffer adopted by Her. (*fidei quam iussorum patientior*).

Aponius ordered to hurry on the Moesian army;

the Sarmatians invited to join.

Raetia watched.

5

Septimius, a body of auxiliaries was sent off to the right flank under Sextilius Felix, who with the Aurian Horse, eight auxiliary Cohorts, and the young levies of Noricum, occupied the banks of the river Inn, which forms the boundary between the Raetians and the Noricans. But neither side ventured on a battle, and the fate of the parties was decided on other fields.

6 Antonius hurried off for the invasion of Italy with some detachments of auxiliaries and part of the cavalry. He was accompanied by Arrius Varus,¹ whose successes in Armenia under Corbulo had gained for him a high reputation as a soldier. Report had it that he had gained his position as a principal Centurion by having disparaged Corbulo's character in a private interview with Nero: an ill-gotten favour which, however welcome at the time, turned ultimately to his destruction. Having occupied Aquileia, Primus and Varus marched by the shortest route to Opitergium² and Altinum, where they were warmly welcomed by the inhabitants. At Altinum they left a garrison as a defence against any attempt from the fleet at Ravenna, not yet having heard of its defection; next Patavium and Ateste came over to their cause. There they learnt that three Vitellian Cohorts, with a body of horse known as the 'Sebosian,'³ were stationed at Forum Alieni,⁴ where they had thrown a

Antonius and Arrius Varus invade Italy.

They occupy several towns,

and surprise a detachment

¹ This Arrius Varus was a trusted officer of Corbulo (Ann. xiii. 9). We shall hear much of his doings in the coming campaign.

² Opitergium (the modern *Oderzo*) and Altinum (*Altino*) were about fifty miles distant from Aquileia. The former was more inland, on the road to Verona; the latter, close to the sea and to the site of the future Venice, was on the high road to Patavium (*Padua*), and to Hostilia on the Po.

³ The Sebosian Horse was apparently a body of irregular cavalry called after its founder, like the *ala Tauriana* at Lyons (i. 64), and the *ala Auriana* (iii. 5). A body of this name (*ala II. Gallorum Sebosiana*) was stationed afterwards in Britain.

⁴ Forum Alieni on the Adige is supposed to occupy the site of *Legnago*, the SE. fortress of the famous Austrian Quadrilateral.

of the Vitellians.

bridge across the river; and hearing that these men were off their guard, they resolved upon an immediate attack. At daybreak, accordingly, the Flavians fell upon the enemy before they could take up their arms, their orders being to kill only a few, and to terrorise the rest into defection. Some few did surrender at once; but the majority broke down the bridge and destroyed the road over which the enemy was advancing. Thus the first act of the war went in favour of the Flavians.

This success promptly brings up the 7th and 13th legions.

The news of this success brought up promptly 7 to Padua the 7th Legion¹ (*Galbiana*), and the 13th (*Gemina*) under its Legate Vedius Aquila. There they remained for a few days' rest, during which time Minicius Justus, Camp Prefect of the 7th Legion, the strictness of whose discipline was little suited for a time of civil war, was sent back to Vespasian to save him from the wrath of the soldiers.

Galba's statues replaced.

Antonius now ordered that in all municipal towns the statues of Galba which had been thrown down during the troubles should be replaced, believing that it would reflect honour on the party of Vespasian to create an impression that they were admirers of Galba, and that the fortunes of that party were likely to revive. Long called for as this step had been, it gave rise to exaggerated feelings of pride and expectation.

Verona selected as a base;

The next question was, What place to choose for the seat of war? It was decided in favour of Verona; 8 not only because the open country around was favourable for cavalry, which was their strong arm, but also because it was thought that there would be both profit and prestige in wresting from Vitellius

¹ Antonius, as we have seen, was the legate in command of the 7th legion, as Vedius Aquila was of the 13th.

a colony with such ample resources. On the way thither, they took possession of Vicetia¹—a small matter in itself, as the town possessed no great resources—but which they deemed it important to acquire from the reflection that it was Caecina's birth-place, and that the enemy's General would thus have his native place taken from him. But Verona was a prize worth securing; it helped the cause both by its example and by its wealth; while the interposition² of the army at that point blocked the passage of the German armies over the Raetian and Julian Alps.

Vicetia occupied.

These movements were unknown to Vespasian, and indeed against his orders, which were to stop the advance at Aquileia, and to await the arrival of Mucianus; to which he added, in explanation of his policy, that so long as they secured Egypt with its command of the corn supply,³ and the revenues of the wealthy provinces of the East, the Vitellian army could be reduced to submission through want of food and pay.⁴ Mucianus kept writing in the same sense,

These movements were against the orders of Vespasian and Mucianus.

¹ Vicetia is the modern *Vicenza*, about half-way between Padua and Verona. Tac. takes no pains to explain the order of events. Forum Alieni (*Legnago*) was on the Athesis (*Adige*) some 30 miles in advance both of Padua and Vicenza. Ateste again was about half-way between Padua and Forum Alieni; we may suppose therefore that Antonius made a dash for Forum Alieni, and returned thence to Padua to take the high road thence to Verona, securing Vicetia on the way.

² The Latin reads illogically, as Tac. gives no explanation of the word *interiectus*. What is meant is that at Verona the Flavian army would be interposed between the Vitellian army coming north from Rome across the Po, and the pass through the Raetian Alps (the Brenner Pass) leading from Raetia, by which the Vitellian reinforcements might be expected to come down

from Germany. Tac. here speaks incorrectly of the Julian Alps as if they extended as far as Raetia. The name 'Julian' is usually confined to the Alps at the extreme NE. of Italy. Longmans' Gazetteer (1895) describes the Julian Alps as situated to the S. of the Save, between the Tagliamento and the Laibach (a right-bank tributary of the Save), and rising to a height of 9395 feet in the mountain Triglav or Terglou.

³ See n. on ii. 82.

⁴ Henderson puts on to this passage the extremest sense that it will bear, as though it asserted it to be the settled policy of Vespasian to abstain from all offensive attack upon Italy and the Vitellian army, and to allow his army to sit quietly at Aquileia guarding the ingress to Italy on the NE., trusting to wear down the Vitellians by starvation, and thus carry out a 'policy of exhaustion.' He points out with great

pretending to aim at a bloodless and painless victory, with other things of that kind, but in reality wishing to keep to himself all the honour and glory of the war. But over those vast spaces of the earth the things were done first, the counsels arrived afterwards.

And so Antonius fell suddenly upon the enemy's outposts, testing the mettle of his men in a slight and 9
indecisive skirmish.

Soon afterwards, Caecina established a fortified camp between the Veronese village of Hostilia¹ and the marshes of the river Tartarus, on a spot protected in the rear by the river, and by a morass on the flank. Now had he only been true to his cause, he might either have crushed the two Legions with the whole strength of the Vitellian army before their junction with the army of Moesia, or else have driven them in ignominious flight out of Italy.² But with one delay

Caecina
encamps
near
Hostilia.

force the folly and impossibility of such a policy in the circumstances; but we cannot believe that Vespasian ever really entertained it. Vespasian had shown himself a great and active soldier in Britain; in Judaea he had distinguished himself by the vigour of his movements. He was the last man likely to fold his arms in an emergency and wait upon events. From the first moment of his elevation he had made the East ring with warlike preparations. What Tac. here implies is only that Vespasian ordered the Danubian troops to await the arrival of Mucianus. On the face of it, that was the only wise policy to pursue. The determination of Antonius to advance with his slender forces against the eight Vitellian legions, without awaiting Mucianus with his reinforcements, was a reckless, madcap resolution. It succeeded only by a miracle, made possible through the incapacity, still more by the treachery, of the Vitellian leaders. Mucianus was also actuated, no doubt, by the desire to exercise the supreme command himself: that he was not at all likely to favour a mere defensive policy is shown by the fact that with his comparatively small force he had actually thought of

crossing the sea from Macedonia and invading Italy from the south (ii. 83).

¹ As already mentioned, Hostilia, on the left bank of the Po, was at the point of crossing for the main road from Rome to the N. and N.E. of Italy. That road diverged from the great north road, the Via Aemilia, at Mutina (*Modena*); and led due N. to Verona. To the N.E., the road to Aquileia, along which the Flavians were expected, ran from Hostilia through Ateste (chap. 6) to Patavium, crossing on the way the sluggish river Tartarus, and the fine river Adige (ancient *Athesis*). The Adige finds its way into the sea near Atria (chap. 12), independently of the Po, some 20 miles further E. The Tartarus wends its slow way through marshy ground, keeping about half-way between the two larger rivers.

² Tac. certainly has reason in saying that if Caecina had been able and willing to bring all his forces into the field at this time, Antonius would have been hopelessly outnumbered. Against his three legions, Caecina had an army little short, according to Henderson, of 40,000 legionaries (see the enumeration of his forces in ii. 100, and Henderson,

after another Caecina gave up to the enemy the first chances of the war; and when he might easily have driven back the enemy by force of arms, he kept writing to them abusive letters until his envoys should conclude terms of treason.

Meantime Aponius Saturninus¹ arrived with the 7th Legion (*Claudianae*). That Legion was under the command of the Tribune Vipstanus Messala,² a high-born and high-minded person—the only perfectly honest man engaged in this war. As the Flavian forces—amounting as yet to only three Legions—were by no means a match for the Vitellians, Caecina wrote abusing their rashness in taking up arms again after their defeat, and extolling the bravery of the German army. In this letter he made only a slight and casual mention of Vitellius; it contained no abuse of Vespasian, no seductive offers, and no menaces. The Flavian leaders, in their reply, made no apology for the past. They spoke grandiloquently of Vespasian, of their army and their cause with confidence; but while treating³ Vitellius as an enemy, they threw out hopes to the Tribunes and Centurions that the privileges which he had granted would be secured to them; and in no ambiguous terms they urged Caecina himself to come over. These letters, being read aloud in public, greatly encouraged the army; for whereas

Aponius joins Antonius with the 7th legion.

Correspondence between the opposing generals.

Civil War, p. 167). Four of these legions, the 1st (*Italica*), the 5th (*Aulauda*), the 15th (*Primigenia*), and the 16th (*Gallica*) had belonged to the army of Valens.

¹ For Aponius Saturninus, the governor of Moesia, see i. 79, ii. 85 and 96. It will be remembered that he had been absent from the conference at Poetovio.

² This officer strenuously supported Antonius throughout the war. He wrote a diary or history of the war, to which Tac. twice refers (chaps. 25 and 28), and we cannot doubt that Tac.

made use of it throughout, especially for military details, and drew from him some of his most graphic incidents. In the above passage, as Henderson well says, 'Tacitus has certainly thanked him gracefully for the use which he himself made of his history.'

³ M here reads *praesumpsero*, for which no satisfactory meaning has yet been found; and as the text has further been confused by a transposition, we may adopt the conj. of Freinsheim, *rescripsere*, followed also by Her.

Caecina had taken a humble tone, as if afraid of offending Vespasian, their own Generals had written of Vitellius in terms of contumely and contempt.¹

Two more legions arrive.

The arrival of two further Legions—the 3rd under Dillius Aponianus, the 8th under Numisius Lupus—determined the Flavians to make a show of their strength, and to throw military lines around Verona. It so happened that the Galbian Legion (the 7th), whose place of work had been assigned to them on the front, caught sight of some auxiliary cavalry in the distance. Seized by a false alarm that these were enemies, the men flew to their arms, suspecting treachery,² and then, in their wrath, fell upon Tampius Flavianus;³ not that they had any proof of guilt on his part, but having long hated him, they now clamoured in a tempest of passion for his death, denouncing him as a relative of Vitellius, as a betrayer of Otho, and for having appropriated their donative. No hearing was given to his defence, though he stretched out his arms in entreaty and prostrated himself upon the ground, his clothes torn, his face and bosom quivering with sobs—things which only inflamed their wrath against him, as though his excessive fear were evidence of a guilty conscience.

False alarm; the men of the 7th attack Flavianus,

who is with difficulty saved by Antonius.

When Flavianus essayed to speak, his voice was drowned in the uproar; every one except Antonius was howled and shouted down. He alone could obtain a hearing; for he spoke with eloquence and authority, and knew how to appease a crowd. As the disorder increased, and the men

¹ As to the practice of publicly reading the correspondence with the enemy, see chap. 3 and n.

² Reading *metu proditionis* with Her. and F. instead of the unintelligible *et ut proditionis* of M.

³ For Tampius Flavianus, see chap. 4. His full title as governor of the Imperial province of Pannonia would be *legatus consularis Caesaris pro praetore Pannoniae*.

passed from abuse and insults to blows and to arms, Antonius ordered Flavianus into chains: knowing this to be a mockery, the soldiers pushed aside the guards round the tribunal, and were proceeding to extremities when Antonius opposed to them his breast and his drawn sword, and declaring that he would die either by their hands or by his own, called by name for help upon all who were known to him, or were conspicuous for their military decorations. Turning then to the standards and to the Gods of war,¹ he implored them to direct this mad spirit of discord against the armies of the enemies. At last the tumult subsided; and as night fell the men slunk away, each to his own tent. Flavianus set out on the same night, and being met by a letter from Vespasian was saved from further danger.

II And now the Legions, as if infected with some contagion, attacked Aponius Saturninus, the Legate of the Moesian army, in consequence of the publication of some letters which he was supposed to have written to Vitellius; and their fury was all the greater that it broke out at mid-day, and not, as previously, when they were worn out with toil and labour. Not less eager now to distinguish themselves for insolence and insubordination than formerly for discipline and good conduct, they clamoured as vociferously for the death of Aponius as they had previously demanded that of Flavianus. For the Moesian Legions² remembered how they had helped the Pannonians to their revenge;³ while the Pannonians, regarding the insubordination of the other army as palliating their own, rejoiced to repeat the offence. Saturninus was

Attack
upon
Aponius
Saturninus,

¹ These would be the images of Gods upon the standards.

² Thus the Moesian legions had

joined in the insurrection against Tarnpius Flavianus.

³ As related in the previous chapter.

who
manages to
escape.

pursued into the pleasure-grounds to which he had betaken himself, and owed his safety not so much to the exertions of Antonius, Aponianus, and Messala, though they made every effort to help him, as to the privacy of the place—an empty bath-furnace—in which he had found concealment.

Thus
Antonius is
left in sole
command
of both
armies.

Soon afterwards, dismissing his lictors, he retired to Padua. The departure of the two Consulars left Antonius with sole power and authority over both armies, secured to him alike by the favour of the soldiers and by the acquiescence of his colleagues.¹ And there were not wanting some who believed that he had been guilty of fomenting both outbreaks in order to keep for himself all the profits of the war.

Lucilius
Bassus
causes the
fleet at
Ravenna to
revolt from
Vitellius ;

Nor were matters any more tranquil with the 12
Vitellians, who were disturbed by a still more disastrous dissension, due not to the suspicions of the multitude, but to the perfidy of their leaders. The men in the fleet being of doubtful mind, seeing that many of them came from Dalmatia and Pannonia—Provinces that were now held by Vespasian—their Prefect Lucilius Bassus had won them over to that side. The conspirators chose night-time for the betrayal, when they might meet at headquarters unknown to the rest. Either shame, or fear of what might be the issue, kept Bassus² within his own house. The ship captains, with much hubbub, overthrew the

¹ The two commanders-in-chief of their respective armies—Aponius Saturninus of the Moesian, Tampius Flavianus of the Pannonian—having been thus scared away, and Marcus Pompeius Silvanus, governor of Dalmatia, not yet having declared himself, there was now no officer in the army higher in rank than the *legati*, each in command of a single legion, and all equal in authority. Antonius was legate of the 7th legion (*Galbiana*): and as the

ablest and most active of their number, the remainder assigned to him, or permitted him to assume, the chief command.

² According to his custom, Tac. in this chapter sometimes calls Lucilius Bassus by his full name, sometimes only Lucilius, sometimes Bassus. I have endeavoured, in this and other instances, to avoid the confusion which this interchange of names might cause to the English reader.

images of Vitellius; the few who offered resistance were cut down, while the rest, eager for something new, went over to Vespasian. Thereupon Bassus came forth and presented himself as leader of the movement; the sailors, however, chose Cornelius Fuscus¹ as their Prefect, who promptly appeared upon the scene. Bassus was conveyed under honourable custody on a Liburnian ship to Atria,² where he was put into chains by Vibennius Rufinus, a Prefect of Horse, who was stationed there on guard. The bonds, however, were at once removed by order of the imperial freedman Hormus: for this man also was accounted among the leaders.³

13 As soon as the defection of the fleet became known, Caecina summoned the leading Centurions and a few common soldiers to headquarters, as the most private part of the camp, at a time when the other men were dispersed for duty. He there expatiated upon the valour of Vespasian and the strength of his party:—*The fleet had deserted; their supplies were running short; Gaul and Spain were hostile, and they had no sure support in the city*—making the worst of everything for Vitellius. Beginning then with those in the plot, and taking the rest by surprise, he made them all swear allegiance to Vespasian; whereupon the images⁴ of Vitellius

Caecina attempts to follow this example,

¹ Fuscus was procurator of Pannonia (chap. 4): for his character, see ii. 86.

² Atria was on the coast between the mouths of the Po and the Adige. A squadron had doubtless been stationed there to check an advance of the Flavians by the coast road; it was to act as a check upon this squadron that Antonius was obliged to leave a garrison at Altinum *adversus classis Ravenatis conatus* (chap. 6).

³ This, of course, is said in bitter irony. According to Vipstanus Messala, it was this man Hormus who first suggested to the soldiers the sacking of

Cremona (chap. 28). He subsequently received the *dignitas equestris* (iv. 39). For a similar contempt of a similar presumption, cp. ii. 61, where it is said of a certain Mariccus *e plebe Boiorum* that he *inserere sese fortunæ . . . ausus est*.

⁴ These would be the small images of the Emperor set up with the eagles in the Principia; see i. 36, and the famous scene in Ann. xv. 29, where, at Corbulo's headquarters, Tiridates places beneath Nero's bust the *insigne regium* which he was to receive afterwards from the Emperor's own hand.

were thrown down, and messengers were dispatched to inform Antonius.

But when news of this treachery ran through the camp; when the soldiers, hurrying to headquarters, beheld the name of Vespasian put up, and the images of Vitellius thrown over, there was at first a moment of blank silence, and then one cry burst forth from all:—

but the soldiers indignantly refuse to desert Vitellius,

What? Had the glory of the German army sunk so low that without a battle fought, without a blow struck, they were to let their hands be bound and render up their arms? What Legions were there on the other side? What but those which they had already conquered? The one great strength of the Othonian army—the 1st and the 14th Legions—were not there: had they routed and laid low those same Legions on that self-same plain only that their own thousands of armed men should be handed over, like a herd of slaves in the market, as a present to the exile Antonius? Were their eight Legions¹ to be treated as an appendage to a single fleet? And that at the bidding of a Bassus and a Caecina—men who after despoiling the Emperor of gardens, palaces, and money, were now robbing him of his soldiers! With their forces still entire, and their blood unspilt—contemptible even in Flavian eyes—what answer could they give to those who should ask of them² an account of their victories and their defeats?

and replace his images.

Such were the cries shouted out by one and all as 14
each man's rage impelled him, and following then the lead of the 5th Legion, the men replaced the images of Vitellius, put Caecina into chains, and chose for

Caecina is put into

¹ *I.e.* the seven legions which had come (in whole or in part) from Germany, and the 1st (*Italica*), which had been picked up by Valens at Lyons.

² The verb *reposco* means something

more than 'to ask with the expectation of an answer,' as Spooner explains it; it implies that the questioner had a right to put the question and to expect an answer to it.

their leaders Fabius Fabullus, Legate of the 5th Legion, and Cassius Longus, Prefect of the camp. Happening to fall in with the soldiers of three Liburnian vessels—innocent men, unaware of what had happened—they slew them; after which they left the camp, and having broken down the bridge,¹ they marched back to Hostilia and thence to Cremona to join the 1st Legion (*Italica*), and the 21st (*Rapax*), which Legions Caecina had sent on with part of the cavalry to secure that Colony.²

chains, and his army marches for Cremona.

15 On hearing of these events, Antonius determined to attack the enemy while they were still at discord, and their forces still divided, before the Generals should recover their authority, the soldiers their obedience, and the Legions the confidence which united strength would give them. He presumed that Valens had set out from Rome, and would quicken his march on hearing of Caecina's defection; for Valens was true to Vitellius, and a skilful general. And in addition to this, a vast inroad of Germans through Raetia³ was apprehended. For Vitellius had summoned auxiliaries enough from Britain, Gaul, and

Antonius determines to attack the enemy at once.

¹ *I.e.* the bridge over the Tartarus.

² Henderson justly comments on the extraordinary want of generalship shown by the Vitellian army in passively remaining on the defensive in an enclosed camp amid the marshes of the Tartarus, instead of at once dashing against the inferior forces of the invader. Two points, left uncertain by Tac., might help to explain Caecina's action. Had his whole forces come up when he took the defensive position on the Tartarus? Had Caecina intended treachery from the beginning, and did he make his dispositions accordingly? We learn in this passage that he had sent on two of his best legions to Cremona. For what purpose were they sent there? There was no enemy to face in that quarter; it was the first duty of Caecina to concentrate his whole army at the one

point at which there was an enemy to strike; see n. on ii. 100. It is hard to resist the conclusion that the whole plan of campaign was deliberately ruined with a view to the treachery which ensued. Valens had not come up; Caecina's defection left the army without a general, and it could only retire dispirited and disorganised to join the remaining two legions at Cremona.

³ It is not evident why Tac. speaks of the expected reinforcements for Vitellius coming through Raetia. That province certainly was favourable to Vitellius; but the reinforcements ordered up from Gaul, Britain, and Spain, would not approach Italy through the Raetian Alps, but by one or other of the great Western passes.

Spain to kindle a war on a gigantic scale,¹ had not Antonius, seeing that danger before him, hurried on a battle and snatched the victory out of his grasp.

In two days' march Antonius arrives at Bedriacum, and advances towards Cremona.

In two days' march from Verona, Antonius arrived with his whole army at Bedriacum.² Next day, keeping in the Legions to fortify the camp, he sent out some auxiliaries into the Cremonese territory to give them a taste for civic plunder under pretence of gathering supplies; and that they might enjoy greater license in plundering, he himself advanced with 4000 horse as far as the 8th milestone from Bedriacum. The scouts, as usual, scoured over a still wider area.

Arrius Varus brings on a cavalry action; he is repulsed.

It was about the 5th hour of the day³ when a rapid 16 horseman announced the approach of the enemy:— *There was a small advance guard, he reported, but he could hear the murmur of a vast host in motion.* While Antonius was considering what to do, Arrius Varus, eager for the fray, dashed forward with the best of the cavalry, and drove back the Vitellians with some trifling slaughter; but as more of them came up, the tide turned, and the foremost in pursuit became the last in flight.⁴

Antonius had not ordered the charge; and he expected what now occurred. Bidding his men take up the fight with good courage, he drew his squadrons

¹ There is no reason to substitute *molem* for *luem* as read here by M (*immensam belli luem*) merely because the latter word is untranslatable. It is one of those Tacitean phrases which we can apprehend in the Latin though we cannot find an exact English equivalent. *Lues* means a great and terrible calamity, such as a plague or a pestilence; it is only once besides used by Tac., of an earthquake, in Ann. ii. 47. The meaning is that had the ordered reinforcements arrived, they would have

been enough of themselves to support a war on a terrible scale of horror and calamity.

² A distance of about 35 miles.

³ *I.e.*, one hour before mid-day.

⁴ The love of a verbal antithesis has led Tac. here to make a pointless point. It is vain to attempt to get any other than their natural meaning out of the words, viz. that when the cavalry turned tail, the last became first and the first last.

to each side, so as to leave a passage in the middle for the reception of Varus and his troopers; he then ordered the Legions to arm, signalling to those in the fields for every man to leave plundering alone, and take the shortest route to the battle. Varus, meanwhile, terror-stricken, plunged into the mass of his own men, bringing panic with him: wounded and unwounded alike were borne back together in terror and confusion along the narrow causeway.

17 In this emergency, Antonius left nothing undone that became a determined General and an intrepid soldier.¹ Conspicuous alike to friend and foe, he threw himself in the way of the panic-stricken men and pulled back the runaways, helping by voice, hand, or counsel wherever the fight was hottest, or any chance presented itself. And so far did his ardour carry him that he transfixed with his spear a standard-bearer who was running away, and then, snatching up his standard, turned it against the enemy. Shamed at this sight, a handful of some hundred horsemen made a stand at a favourable spot where the road was narrow, and flight barred by a broken bridge over a river with steep banks and of uncertain depth. This necessity—or happy chance—changed the fortune of the day. Firmly closing up their ranks, the Flavians awaited the disordered rush of the Vitellians and rolled them back. Antonius pressed hard upon the stricken enemy, cutting down all in his way, while the men took to plundering, each carrying off arms or horses as the fancy took him. And those who but lately had been wandering in

Antonius
restores the
battle,

¹ Tac. does full justice to the qualities of Antonius as a general. He boasted, perhaps unduly, but with truth, that the victory of the Flavian armies was entirely due to him (chap. 53); and it

is impossible not to feel that he was unjustly treated when his services were so entirely put on one side after the war was over, mainly through the jealousy of Mucianus.

flight over the fields, hearing the shouts of triumph, hurried in to share the victory.¹

At the 4th milestone from Cremona the standards 18 of the two Legions *Italica* and *Rapax* flashed upon them. These Legions had advanced to that point during the initial success of their own cavalry; but now that the tide was turned, they neither opened up their ranks to receive the discomfited horsemen, nor yet advanced to attack the enemy at a moment when he was worn out by pursuing and fighting over all that distance. With no guide but chance,² they felt the want of a leader in their difficulties as they had never done in moments of success; and their line was wavering before the charge of the victorious horse, when up came the Tribune Vipstanus Messala, with his Moesian auxiliaries, after a forced march in which many of the legionaries³ had kept up with

and at the 4th milestone from Cremona beats back the attack of the legions *Italica* and *Rapax*.

¹ The battle described in these two chapters was a mere cavalry engagement, not very much more than an affair of outposts. The cavalry on the Vitellian side were those sent on along with the 1st and 21st legions to Cremona (chap. 14); these two legions were unable by themselves to make a stand against Antonius, as we shall see in chap. 18. Meanwhile where was Caecina's main army, which was on its way to join the small force at Cremona? How had Antonius managed to outstrip it, and be in time to inflict a defeat on the Cremonese army before Caecina and the main Vitellian army had arrived? Henderson gives the answer in a convincing way. The Vitellian army, disorganised and leaderless after Caecina's treachery, did not venture to attack the scarcely inferior forces of the Flavians at Verona. They resolved to make at once for Cremona; but they feared to take the direct route on the N. side of the Po, via Mantua, which would expose them to a flank attack from Verona. Determined not to risk an engagement before reaching Cremona, they crossed the Po and took the route to the S. of it, via Mutina, Parma, and possibly Placentia. That

route would be 110 miles long: if the Po were re-crossed at some point below Placentia, it might be some 25 to 30 miles shorter. Meanwhile the Flavians had only 55 miles to march direct from Verona to Cremona; a march of two days brought them to Bedriacum (about 33 miles), without showing them any traces of the retiring Vitellians; and the cavalry engagement was fought upon the following day (Oct. 27). That evening the Flavians encamped outside the walls of Cremona; and on the very same night the whole Vitellian army arrived within the town, full of fight and venture, after accomplishing in three days marches of at least 30 miles a day. Henderson is justly full of admiration for such an exploit: 'There have been few troops in the world equal to those of Rome.' The march of Antonius to meet an enemy whose combined forces would greatly have outnumbered his own, was no less bold; but prompt as it was, it was little short of a miracle that it succeeded.

² Nothing can be made of *forte victi*, the reading of M. The reading followed is that of Heraeus, *forte recti*: Halm reads *forte ducti*, which is quite as good.

³ Here again the reading of M (*mili-*

them.¹ This mingled onset of horse and foot broke the line of the Legions, the proximity of the walls of Cremona adding hope to their flight rather than fresh courage to their resistance. Antonius pressed his victory no further, mindful of the fatigue and the wounds which during that hard-fought day, however prosperous in the end, both horses and horsemen had endured.²

19 As evening fell, the whole strength of the Flavian army came up. As the men passed over the heaps of slain and other traces of the recent slaughter, they demanded to be led on to Cremona, as though the war were over, to receive the submission of the conquered, or to storm their city. Such were the fine words used openly; but what every man said to himself was this:—

The Colony stood on level ground, and could easily be stormed. A night attack needed no more courage than an attack by day, and afforded greater license in plundering. If they waited for day, they would hear talk of peace and petitions; their labours and their wounds would be rewarded with idle words about the glory of clemency, while the wealth of the Cremonese would pass into the pockets of the Legates and the Prefects, since the plunder of a captured city fell to the soldiers, that of a surrendered city to the Generals.

By evening the whole Flavian army had come up;

the men demand to be led on to Cremona.

tiae legionariis) is impossible; and the emendation *multi e legionariis* is not very satisfactory. *Raptim ductos* are the important words, and the general sense seems to be that the legionaries, though they were heavily armed, had marched as rapidly as the rest of the army.

¹ It is to be noted here that the auxiliaries, being lightly armed, and more free to move, were able and expected to march faster than the legionaries. That many of the legionaries kept up with the auxiliaries is men-

tioned as somewhat of a feat. For the same reason the auxiliaries were usually put in front at the beginning of a battle.

² The engagement recorded in chaps. 17 and 18 is very inadequately described. We are given special incidents, especially that relating to one particular corps, but details are wanting as to the progress of the battle as a whole, and we are left without knowledge as to the numbers of men engaged on either side.

Neither Tribunes nor Centurions could gain a hearing. To prevent any one's voice from being heard, the men rattled their arms, determined to obey no order except an order to advance.

Antonius
does his
utmost to
restrain
them,

Thereupon Antonius went in among the maniples, 20 and having secured silence by his commanding presence, assured the men that:—

He was not going to snatch glory or reward from men who had so richly deserved them; but armies and their Generals had different parts to play. It was right for soldiers to be keen for battle; the General had to win by foresight, by taking counsel, by delay more often than by temerity. As he had done all that hand and sword could do to win victory, so now he would help them by thought and counsel, the arts proper to a General. There could be no doubt what must happen in a night attack upon a city strange to them, with an enemy within having every opportunity for ambuscade. Even if the gates were standing open, no entrance ought to be made except by day, and after careful exploration. What? would they attempt an assault when they had no means of seeing what parts of the ground were level, what was the height of the walls, whether the city was one to be attacked with javelins and engines, or by siege-works and pent-houses?

He then addressed individual men, and asked them, *Had they brought their spades and axes with them, and the other implements for assaulting cities? And when they answered that they had not, 'What?' he continued, 'Can hands, however strong, break down walls and undermine them with swords and javelins? If we shall need to build a mound, to put up screens¹ and*

¹ The *pluteus*, according to Vegetius (*De re mil.* iv. 15), was a convex wicker shelter, with an arched roof,

covered with hides, and running on rollers. See ii. 21, 16, where *plutei*, *crates*, and *vineae* are all named. See

pent-houses to protect us, shall we stand, an improvident, helpless crowd, marvelling at the height of the enemy's towers and battlements? Better far to wait for one night till we can bring up the machines and the engines that shall give us strength and victory.'

So saying, he sent off sutlers and camp-followers with the freshest of the horsemen to Bedriacum, to bring up supplies and all the other things that were required.

21 But this advice was little to the mind of the soldiers; and they were near rising in mutiny when some horsemen, riding up to the very walls, seized some stragglers from the town, from whom they learnt that the six Vitellian Legions,¹ with all the army which had been at Hostilia, had arrived that very day, after a march of thirty miles; and that, having heard of the defeat of their comrades, they were preparing for battle, and would soon be upon them.

but word is brought that the whole Vitellian army has arrived that day, and is ready to fight;

This alarming intelligence opened their deaf ears to the counsels of the General, who ordered the 13th Legion to take up a position on the causeway of the Postumian high-road;² next to them on the left he placed the 7th Legion (*Galbiana*) on the open plain; then the 7th (*Claudiana*), protected in front by a field ditch which happened to be there; the 8th occupied an open pathway on the right, while beyond them again was the 3rd Legion, dispersed among thick brushwood.

whereupon Antonius disposes his legions for battle.

Such was the order of the eagles and the standards; but in the darkness the men got intermingled as chance directed. The Praetorian standard was

also Rice Holmes, *Conquest of Gaul*, p. 604.

¹ These six legions were the 1st (*Germanica*), the 4th, the 5th, the 15th, the 16th, and the 22nd.

² The Postumian Road, as we have seen, was the direct road from Bedriacum to Cremona, and as it ran through low ground, there was a high causeway in the middle (ii. 42).

close to that of the 3rd Legion; the auxiliary cohorts were at the extremities of the line, the cavalry on the flanks and rear; the Suebian princes, Sido and Italicus, with a picked body of their countrymen, took their station in the van.¹

The two armies come into collision about the third hour of the night.

The Vitellian army—whose reasonable course 22 would have been to rest at Cremona, and after invigoration by sleep and food to overpower and crush next day an enemy exhausted by cold and hunger—having no leader and no plan, came into collision with the Flavians, all drawn up and ready for battle, about the third hour of the night. Disarrayed as they were, marching in wrath and darkness,² I cannot affirm the order of their line; but others³ have recorded that the 4th Legion (*Macedonica*) was on their right wing, that the 5th and 15th, with the detachments of the three British Legions (the 9th, 2nd, and 20th), formed the centre; while the 16th, the 22nd, and the 1st made up the left. The men of the *Rapax* and *Italica* Legions (the 21st and 1st⁴) were mixed through all the maniples; the cavalry and auxiliaries chose their own positions.

The battle lasts, with varied incidents, throughout the night.

Through all that night a varied and doubtful battle raged, dealing destruction now to one side, now to the other. Courage and strength went for nothing; even eyes were of no use to see with. Both sides were armed alike; frequent questionings revealed the watchwords; the standards got mixed, borne

¹ Spooner suggests that this accurate account of the arrangement of the Flavian forces was probably derived from Vipstanus Messala, who was present. See n. on chap. 9.

² The phrase *per iram ac tenebras* contains one of those startling collocations of which Tac. is so fond, and which reduce translators to despair.

³ *Alii* here seems to mean other than

those usually followed by Tac.; as mentioned above, his main authority for the details of this campaign was probably Vipstanus Messala.

⁴ These two legions had doubtless suffered so much earlier in the day that they were either demoralised or unable to put themselves again as complete units into the field.

now in this direction, now in that, by any knot of men that had chanced to capture them from the enemy. The hardest-pressed Legion was the 7th,¹ recently raised by Galba. Six of the Principal Centurions were killed, and some of their standards were captured; the eagle itself was saved by Atilius Verus, a Centurion of the first rank,² who fell at last after slaying many of the enemy.

- 23 To support his wavering line, Antonius called up the Praetorians, who at once took up the fighting, repelling and repulsed by turns. For the Vitellians, whose missiles had at first been wildly aimed, dashing into trees without inflicting injury on the enemy, had now brought up their engines to the raised causeway so as to have a free and open field for their discharges. One catapult³ of enormous size, belonging to the 15th Legion, was mowing down the enemy's ranks with huge stones, and would have dealt slaughter far and wide but for the splendid action of two soldiers, who disguising themselves behind shields⁴ which they had snatched from a heap of slain, cut through the fastenings and springs⁵ of the machine. The two men were at once cut down, so

¹ This legion had been drawn up in a place where there was no cover or defence (*patenti campo*, chap. 21).

² It is generally held, though some scholars think differently, that the *primi ordines* of centurions formed a definite class by themselves; in all probability they were the centurions of the 1st cohort. The 1st centurion of the 1st maniple in each cohort was called *pilus prior*; and the 1st centurion of the 1st maniple of the 1st cohort was called *primus pilus prior* or *primipilus*. There were in all 60 centurions in a legion; but the whole question of the several ranks among them, and the system of promotion from one to another, is complex and uncertain. The question is discussed

by Rice Holmes (*Conquest of Gaul*, pp. 571 foll.).

³ The *ballista* was an engine for discharging stones or logs; the *catapulta* for discharging arrows. Both were worked by horizontal arms kept back by twisted ropes which were released by a trigger. The *ballista* was started at a higher angle from the ground, like our mortars.

⁴ The shields were taken from some of the enemy's slain.

⁵ One of these terms (*vincla*) apparently refers to the fastenings by which the weight or counterpoise was attached to the machine; the other (*libramenta*) to those by which the counterpoise was kept in its place until the moment of release and discharge.

that their names have perished ; but there is no doubt about their exploit.

The rising of the moon helps the Vitellians.

Fortune, so far, had favoured neither side ; but when the night was far spent, the moon arose and threw a treacherous light upon the combatants. This favoured the Flavians ; for as the light came from behind, it lengthened the shadows of the men and horses, so that the enemy's missiles, aimed at what they mistook for real bodies, fell short of their mark, while the Vitellians, having the light in their faces, were exposed unprotected to foes who seemed to be shooting at them from out of hiding:

Antonius exhorts each legion separately.

Thereupon Antonius, as soon as he could recognise, and be recognised by, his men, shaming some by his reproaches, bestowing praise and encouragement on others, fired them all with hopes and promises. He asked the Pannonian Legions,¹ *Why had they taken up arms again? There lay the field on which they might wipe out the stain of their past disgrace, and regain their honour!* Turning then to the Moesians, he appealed to them as the leaders and authors of the war:—*In vain had they hurled threats and taunts against the Vitellians if they could not abide their onset or their looks!* 24

Addressing thus each in turn, he spoke at greater length to the 3rd Legion, recalling to them their glories old and new: how under Antony they had defeated the Parthians,² under Corbulo the Armenians, and more recently the Sarmatians.

He rebukes the Praetorians.

Then turning indignantly to the Praetorians, '*What else will you be but country clowns,*' he cried, '*if not*

¹ These were the 13th and the 7th (*Galbiana*). The Moesian legions next mentioned were the 3rd, the 7th (*Clau-diana*), and the 8th.

² Referring to the victories gained

by Mark Antony over the Parthians, mainly by his lieutenant Ventidius, in B.C. 39 and 38: his much-vaunted expedition in B.C. 36 proved a failure.

victorious now? What other Emperor, what other camp, will welcome you? There, there,¹ are your standards and your arms! defeat will be death, for you have drunk dishonour to the dregs.'

At this a vast shout arose, and the men of the 3rd Legion,² after Syrian fashion, saluted the rising sun.

25 Hence a rumour ran round—or was deliberately started by Antonius—that Mucianus had arrived, and that the two armies had saluted each other. The Flavians stepped forth as though newly reinforced, while the Vitellian line showed gaps, according as each man's fear or courage, in the absence of a leader, tended to draw it apart or to close it up. Perceiving that the enemy were giving way, Antonius hurled his columns against them; their ranks loosened and broke, and becoming entangled among waggons and artillery, could not be re-formed. The victors, in hot pursuit, poured along the open pathway.³

The Vitellians are driven into Cremona.

The carnage that ensued was marked by a notable event, the slaughter of a father by his son. I have the authority of Vipstanus Messala for the story and the name. A Spaniard called Julius Mansuetus, having joined the Legion *Rapax*, had left a youthful son at home. The boy grew up, was enrolled in the 7th Legion by Galba, encountered his father in the fight, and struck him down. While he was rifling the half-lifeless body, each recognised the other: the son, sobbing and wailing, embraced his dying

A horrible incident.

¹ *I.e.* 'in the ranks of the enemy,' alluding to their defeat in the first battle of Bedriacum.

² It will be remembered that this legion, the 3rd (*Gallica*), had recently been transferred from Syria to Moesia.

³ This would seem to be the same

as the *apertus limes* on which the 8th legion had been drawn up (chap. 21). Whether this road was parallel to the main road, or ran across it, is not very clear; the former seems to suit the present passage best, the latter that in chap. 21.

father, imploring his spirit to be appeased, and not to loathe him as a parricide :—*The deed was a public deed*, he cried : *what fraction of a civil war was a single soldier ?*

With that he lifted the body, dug a grave, and paid the last duties to his parent. The scene attracted those that were near, and then others, till the whole army was moved to wonder and to horror, and called down curses on that cruellest of wars. Yet none forebore from slaying and despoiling neighbours, relatives, or brothers ; they talked of it as a crime, but they did it all the same.

Formid-
able nature
of the de-
fences of
the enemy's
camp
outside
Cremona.

On arriving at Cremona, they found a new 26
and formidable task before them. During the war with Otho, the German soldiers had laid out their camp round the walls of Cremona, and surrounded it with a rampart ; and since then they had added to its defences.¹ The sight of these works made the victors pause ; the Generals hesitated what orders to give. To attempt an assault with an army that had been toiling day and night, would be an arduous, and with no reserves at hand, a hazardous, undertaking. To return to Bedriacum would mean a long and exhausting march, and their late victory would go for nothing ; to lay out a camp with an enemy close by, who could at any moment swoop down upon them when dispersed and labouring at the works, would also be a perilous operation. And above all these things the Generals feared the temper of their men,

¹ Spooner supposes they had put a wooden palisade on the top of the *vallum* ; this may be referred to below, chap. 29, in the words *pinnas ac summa valli*. In the same passage, however, we read of a tower built on to, or adjoining, the *vallum*, so that both means of strengthening the works may have

been used. Such additions must have been made quite recently, by the two legions sent on to Cremona, in anticipation of a Flavian attack. So completely was the Vitellian policy, as Henderson points out, a policy of the defensive.

more patient of danger than of delay. For safe counsels had no attraction for them; all their hopes lay in temerity; wounds, blood, and slaughter counted as nothing with them in their lust for plunder.¹

27 Antonius was of the same mind himself, and ordered the camp to be encircled. The fighting was at first from a distance, with arrows and with stones; here the Flavians suffered the most, as the enemy shot down upon them from above. Antonius then apportioned the rampart and the gates among the Legions, in order that by this division of labour the brave might be marked off from the cowardly, and a rivalry of honour kindled among the men.

Antonius orders an assault.

The part of the rampart nearest to the road from Bedriacum was assigned to the 3rd and 7th Legions; that on the right to the 8th and the 7th (*Claudiana*): while the 13th marched right on to the gate facing Brixia.² Some delay took place while spades and pickaxes were being collected from the adjoining country; pruning-hooks also and ladders were brought up.

An advance was then made in close tortoise formation, the men holding their shields above their heads.³ Both sides employed Roman tactics;

Desperate fighting on the ramparts.

¹ The passage as it stands is illogical (*omnisque caedes et vulnera et sanguis aviditate praedae pensabantur*). Wounds might be compensated by plunder, or fear of slaughter might be outweighed by lust for plunder; but wounds and death could not be compensated by the lust for plunder. Tac. frequently seeks to gain strength by thus rolling two different ideas, each left incomplete, into one sentence. The order also of the substantives (*caedes et vulnera et sanguis*) is illogical, not less so than that in a recent parliamentary phrase which gained some celebrity—'death, disaster, and damnation.'

² The expression used by Tac. (*ad Brixianam portam impetus tulit*) im-

plies that the Brixian gate would be the last to be reached by the Flavian army. But Brixia was N.E. from Cremona, and the road thence would naturally reach Cremona at the same point, or nearly at the same point, as the road from Bedriacum. We may conjecture therefore that the Flavian army marched to the left on approaching the camp; keeping the camp on their right hand, they would come to the Brixian gate last.

³ The *testudo* or 'tortoise,' as here described, was formed by the soldiers holding their shields above their heads so as to form a compact roof; the front men standing upright, those behind stooping or kneeling so as to

the Vitellians rolled down ponderous stones upon the assailants, and then thrust spears and poles into the disjointed and swaying tortoise, till at last the structure of shields gave way, and a mass of bleeding and mangled bodies was dashed to the ground.

The generals point to Cremona as a prize.

And now a pause would have occurred had not the Generals, whose exhortations to the wearied soldiery seemed to be falling on heedless ears, pointed out to them Cremona.

Whether it was Hormus¹ who made this suggestion, as Messala relates, or whether we should prefer the testimony of Gaius Plinius, who throws the blame on Antonius, I cannot readily determine; except that no act of infamy, however gross, would have been foreign to the life and character of either. After this, neither blood nor wounds could stop the men from hewing at the rampart, and battering in the gates. Leaning shoulder to shoulder, they re-formed the tortoise, and climbing on to its back, clutched hold of the arms or weapons of the enemy, till at last the wounded and the unwounded, the dying and the dead,² rolled down together, men perishing in divers ways and by every form of death. 28

The hottest of the fight was sustained by the 3rd and 7th Legions: it was on that point that Antonius threw himself with a chosen body of auxiliaries. Unable to withstand the determined character of the attack, and seeing how their missiles glanced off the tortoise, the Vitellians at last toppled down their 29

present a sloping surface. The name *testudo* was also applied to sheds of various kinds, roofed in to protect besiegers, and mounted on wheels or rollers. See Dict. Ant. and Rice Holmes, *Conquest of Gaul*, p. 603.

¹ For Hormus see above, chap. 12 and iv. 39.

² The language is confused; it almost reads as if the *integri* and the *saucii* perished with the rest.

engine itself upon the ascending enemy ; but though the engine for the moment scattered and buried under it those on whom it fell, it also dragged down with it the battlements and upper portions of the rampart in its fall. At the same moment an adjoining tower gave way under volleys of stones ; and while the 7th, in wedge-like formation, pressed their way in, the 3rd battered in the gate with swords and axes.

All writers are agreed that Gaius Volusius, a soldier of the 3rd Legion, was the first to enter. Mounting upon the rampart, beating down all resistance, and lifting up his voice as well as his hand, this man bellowed out that the camp was taken ; and while the now panic-stricken Vitellians cast themselves down from the rampart, the rest forced their way in, and the whole open space between the camp and the city walls became filled with the bodies of the slain.

At last the camp is taken.

30 And now new difficulties presented themselves. The city had lofty walls, with towers of stone, and iron-barred gates ; javelins were poured down by the defenders ; within was the vast Cremonese population, devoted to the Vitellian cause, while the people from a great part of Italy had flocked in for an annual fair held at that very time—an assemblage whose numbers might help the besieged, but supplied the besiegers with a fresh incitement to plunder. Antonius ordered fire to be applied to the finest buildings outside the walls, hoping that the Cremonese might be induced to transfer their allegiance by the destruction of their property. Some of the buildings that adjoined and overtopped the walls he filled with his best men, who by means of beams, tiles, and firebrands cleared the battlements of their defenders.

Cremona itself attacked.

The higher Vitellian officers are ready to surrender; not so the men.

And when the Legions proceeded to gather for 31 the tortoise formation, while the other troops poured in javelins and stones, the hearts of the Vitellians began to sink within them. The superior officers were ready to surrender, fearing that, if the town also were destroyed,¹ there would be no hope of pardon for themselves, and that all the fury of the conquerors would vent itself, not upon the penniless multitude, but upon the Tribunes and Centurions who would be worth the killing. But the common soldiers, careless of the future, and protected by their insignificance, still held out; wandering about the streets, or hiding in houses, they would not sue for peace even when they had abandoned war.² The commanders of the camp tore down the name and effigies of Vitellius; they released Caecina from the chains by which he was still bound, and besought him to plead their cause. Repulsed with disdain, they presented the ignominious spectacle of brave men with tears in their eyes³ imploring a traitor's help.

Submission of the city.

They then hung out wreaths and fillets⁴ from the walls; and when Antonius ordered hostilities to cease, they brought out the standards and eagles, followed by an unarmed and dejected crowd with eyes fixed upon the ground. The conquerors poured round them, reviling them at first and threatening violence; but afterwards, when they saw their vanquished foes submitting their cheek to the smiter,

¹ *I.e.* if the city were stormed as well as the camp.

² Tac. seems unable to resist the pleasure of bringing in the antithesis between *pax* and *bellum*; in this passage the antithesis seems somewhat forced. Similarly in i. 63 we have *quaeque alia placamenta hostilis irae*

non quidem in bello sed pace tendebantur. So in i. 54, 16, *faciliore inter malos consensu ad bellum quam in pace ad concordiam.*

³ For the frequency with which we hear of Roman soldiers bursting into tears, see note on i. 69, p. 80.

⁴ See i. 66 and n.

and meekly enduring every kind of insult, the thought came over them that these were the men who had used so mercifully their recent victory at Bedriacum. But when Caecina came forth, conspicuous in his Consul's robe,¹ and pushing the crowd aside with his lictors, the wrath of the conquerors flashed out: they reproached him for his arrogance and brutality—so hateful are such qualities²—and even for his perfidy. Antonius, however, afforded him protection, and sent him under escort to Vespasian.

32 Meanwhile the Cremonese mob was roughly treated by the armed soldiers, and a massacre was not far off when the men were pacified by the entreaties of their Generals. Antonius summoned an assembly, where he spoke grandiloquently of the victors, and mercifully of the conquered, but without saying anything one way or another about Cremona. Now in addition to natural love of plunder, the army had an old grudge which impelled them to the destruction of the inhabitants. They were believed to have aided the Vitellians in the Othonian war as well; and when the 13th Legion had been left there afterwards to build an amphitheatre, the Cremonese, with the usual impudence³ of a city mob, had indulged in saucy gibes at their expense. This bad feeling had been increased by other things besides: Caecina had held a gladiatorial show in Cremona; the city had twice been the seat of war; the inhabitants had supplied the Vitellians with provisions when in the field;

The Cremonese roughly handled.

¹ Caecina had been made consul along with Valens for the months of Sept. and Oct. (ii. 71).

² Though Tac. here uses *scelera* in the plural, it might seem that the parenthesis refers specially to the crime of *perfidia*. *Superbia* and *saevitia* could hardly be described as *scelera*. The

point of the passage is given by *etiam*; they detested perfidy, even though it had been in favour of their own side. It is to be noted that Tac. uses the word *scelus* in a very wide sense.

³ For the phrase, *ut sunt procacia urbanae plebis ingenia*, cp. *vernacula utebantur urbanitate* (ii. 88).

and some of their women, inflamed by party zeal, had marched out to battle and been slain. The time of fair also gave to the Colony, rich at all times, the appearance of being more full of wealth than ever.

Supposed
saying of
Antonius.

The other Generals were little noticed; Antonius, with his high fame and fortunes, was the observed of all. Hurrying off to a bath to wash off his blood-stains, he complained that the water was too cold; an answer was returned that, *It would soon be hotter*.¹ This chance remark, uttered by a slave, was caught up, and brought upon Antonius the odium of having given the signal for setting fire to the town—which as a matter of fact was in flames already.

Sack of the
city.

Forty thousand armed men now burst into the city, together with sutlers and camp followers in greater number—a crowd still more prone to acts of lust and violence. No age, no dignity, was a protection. Ravishing was mixed up with slaughter; and slaughter followed upon outrage. Old men and women, well stricken in years and of no value for plunder, were maltreated by way of sport. Grown-up maidens or comely youths that came in the way were violently torn to pieces by ravishers, who ended by falling in murderous conflict upon each other. Men carrying off for themselves money or offerings of solid gold from the temples, were hewn down² by others stronger than themselves. Others, not satisfied with the plunder ready to their hand, plied owners with lash and torture in their hunt for hidden or buried treasure; bearing torches in their hands, they threw them by way of sport into the vacant houses

33

¹ It is obvious that the remark was made by the bath attendant in apologising for the coldness of the water; but the story ran round, and got attributed in a sinister sense to Antonius.

² M reads *truncabantur*, for which Heins. reads *obtruncabantur*. But the sense must be the same with either word, and Tac. takes great liberties with compounds.

and temples as soon as they had emptied them of their valuables. In an army so varied in character and in tongue, made up of citizens, allies, and foreigners, every man had his own cupidities, each was a rule unto himself, and nothing was unlawful.

Cremona lasted them for four whole days. And when every other building, sacred and profane, had sunk into the flames, the temple of Mefitis¹ alone, outside the walls, survived: protected, perhaps, by its situation—perhaps by the divinity.

History of
the city.

34 Such was the end of Cremona, in the 286th year from its foundation in the Consulship of Tiberius Sempronius and Publius Cornelius.² Hannibal was then threatening Italy, and the city was founded as a defence against the Transpadane Gauls, or any other invader who might cross the Alps. The number of her colonists, the convenience of her rivers,³ the richness of her soil, her connexions⁴ and inter-marriages with neighbouring tribes, had brought her great and continuous prosperity: untouched by foreign foe, she fell a prey to civil war.

Conscious of the horror excited by these shameful atrocities, Antonius ordered that no Cremonese citizens should be kept in captivity; and indeed they had become valueless to the soldiers as plunder from an agreement throughout Italy not to purchase such slaves. Hence a massacre began; which becoming generally known, the captives were secretly bought

¹ The Goddess of evil exhalations, esp. of a sulphureous character, so common in the volcanic region of S. Italy.

² For the circumstances of the founding of the two Latin colonies of Cremona and Placentia, in the territory of the Insubrians, both in the year B.C. 218, for the purpose of keeping in check the Gallic tribes north of the Po, see Liv.

xxi. 25 and xxxi. 48, and Polyb. iii. 40. See also n. on ii. 17.

³ The river Addua (*Adda*), which flows down from the Lake of Como and joins the Po some 8 miles above Cremona, was also navigable.

⁴ The word *adnexus*, which occurs only in this passage, seems intended to include commercial and other friendly relations.

back by their friends and relatives. What remained of the population] soon returned to Cremona, and through the munificence of the burghers, aided by the encouragement of Vespasian, the Forums and Temples of the city were replaced.

The Vitellian legions dispersed.

As the infected condition of the ground made it impossible to remain beside the ruins of the buried city, the army was moved out to the 3rd milestone, where the disordered and cowering Vitellians were ranged under their proper standards. The vanquished Legions were dispersed throughout Illyricum, lest they should play a doubtful part so long as the Civil War might last. Messengers were then dispatched to carry news of the victory to Britain and the Spanish Provinces; while to afford visible proof of the fact, Julius Calenus, a Tribune, was sent to Gaul, and Alpinus Montanus, Prefect of a cohort, to Germany, the former being an Aeduan, the latter a Treveran. Both of them had been Vitellians. At the same time the passes over the Alps were secured, as it was suspected that Germany might be preparing to help Vitellius. 35

Slothfulness of Vitellius.

To return now to Vitellius. Having compelled Fabius Valens to take the field a few days after the departure of Caecina, he screened himself from care by self-indulgence. He made no military preparations; he neither encouraged his soldiers by addresses, nor hardened them by exercises; he avoided the public eye; and like those sluggish animals which lie torpid when supplied with food, he secreted himself in shady gardens, dismissing with a like oblivion the past, the present, and the future. While listlessly languishing in the Arician Grove, he was dumbfounded by the treachery of Lucilius Bassus, and the defection 36

of the fleet at Ravenna. Soon afterwards, with mingled grief and glee, he heard of Caecina's defection, and that the army had thrown him into chains: in that dull soul the satisfaction outweighed the alarm. Returning in triumph to the city, he discoursed to a crowded assembly on the splendid devotion of the army; and having ordered the arrest of Publius Sabinus, Prefect of the Praetorians, because of his friendship with Caecina, he appointed Alfenus Varus¹ in his stead.

37 Soon afterwards he addressed the Senate in a speech of studied grandiloquence, and received elaborate flatteries in return. His brother Lucius proposed a severe resolution against Caecina; while the rest, with carefully prepared indignation, declaimed against the Consul who had deserted his country, the General his Emperor, the friend loaded with wealth and honours his benefactor — each giving vent to his own grievances while pretending sympathy for Vitellius. No one uttered a word against the Flavian Generals; they condemned the misbehaviour and the folly of the army, and used ambiguous circumlocutions to avoid any mention of Vespasian.

He addresses the Senate.

One man's flatteries secured for him the Consulship for a single day—such being the unexpired portion of Caecina's term of office—with much ridicule alike to the giver and the receiver of the honour. The man's name was Rosius Regulus; on the 31st of October he entered upon, and resigned, his office. Persons learned in such matters remarked that never before had anyone been succeeded to a Consulship without a law making the office vacant.² Once before the

Rosius Regulus made consul for one day.

¹ He had been prefect of the camp in the army of Valens: apparently a smart and active officer (ii. 29 and 43).

² The expression here used (*non abrogato magistratu neque lege lata*) is hardly correct. In the first place, Tac.

Consulship had been held for a single day, by Caninius Rebilus;¹ but that was in the days of the Dictator Caesar, when the spoils of the Civil War had to be enjoyed with haste.

Murder of
Junius
Blaesus

About this time the murder of Junius Blaesus² 38 became known and caused much talk. The following is the account I have received of it.

Vitellius was lying seriously ill in the Servilian Gardens³ when he noticed lights blazing during the night in a neighbouring mansion. On enquiring the cause, he was told that Caecina Tuscus⁴ was entertaining a large company, the principal guest of the evening being Junius Blaesus. Exaggerated statements were made as to the magnificence of the banquet, the abandoned festivity of the guests, and other things, while some did not fail to find fault with Tuscus and the others—but more particularly with Blaesus—for enjoying themselves at a time when the Emperor was unwell. As soon as the tribe that are ever on the watch for imperial resentments saw plainly that Vitellius was incensed, and that Blaesus could be undone, the accuser's part was assigned to the Emperor's brother Lucius, who hated Blaesus, being

does not make it clear that his remark only applies to abnormal vacancies, not to the usual case of an office becoming vacant through lapse of time. In the next place, the words seem to imply that the *abrogatio* of a magistracy could be effected otherwise than by the passing of a law, which was not the case. The two phrases are one and the same.

¹ The celebrated case of Caninius Rebilus occurred in the year B.C. 45. But his case was different in this, that on that occasion the consulship became vacant by death. Caesar summoned the *comitia centuriata* and pronounced Caninius consul at 7 p.m. Hence Cicero's joke that no man breakfasted, and that Caninius himself never slept,

during his consulship (Fam. vii. 30).

² It will be remembered how handsomely Junius Blaesus, then governor of the Lugdunensis, behaved to Vitellius on his arrival at Lyons, fitting him out with everything necessary to assume his proper state as Emperor (ii. 59).

³ These were favourite pleasure-grounds of Nero's (Ann. xv. 55), supposed to have been on the left bank of the Tiber, as Nero took refuge there with the intention of escaping to Ostia (Suet. Nero 47).

⁴ A person of some distinction: once thought of by Nero as successor to Burrus as *praefectus praetorio* (Ann. xiii. 20), and afterwards prefect of Egypt.

filled with an evil jealousy of a man whose high reputation placed him far above one stained, like himself, by every infamy.

Bursting into the imperial chamber, Lucius fell at his brother's feet, clasping the Emperor's son in his arms; and when Vitellius asked what was the cause of his agitation, Lucius replied that:—

on the
false accu-
sation of L.
Vitellius.

It was no fear or anxiety of his own that troubled him; his prayers and his tears were for his brother and his brother's children. It was idle to be afraid of Vespasian, kept away as he was by all the German Legions, by the valour and the loyalty of so many Provinces, and finally, by those vast spaces of land and sea; the foe of whom they had to beware was in the city and in their very bosom—one who boasted of his Junian¹ and Antonian² ancestry, and who paraded before the soldiers all the graciousness and the grandeur of his imperial parentage. Towards him all minds were turning, while Vitellius, careless of friend or foe, was nursing a rival who could contemplate from a banquet the sufferings of his Emperor. Let that man be given a night of gloom and mourning in return for his ill-timed revelry; let him know and feel that Vitellius was still alive and still Emperor, and that, if aught happened to him, he had a son to leave behind him.

39 Hesitating between the crime and the fear of consequences—fearing that to delay the death of Blaesus might hasten his own, while to order it openly might bring down a storm of odium upon his head—Vitellius resolved to proceed by poison; his guilt being proved by the undisguised joy which he displayed during a visit to Blaesus, as well as by a brutal speech in

¹ The Junii were among the most illustrious families of Rome (Juv. viii. 27).

² Blaesus could claim descent both

from Octavia, the sister of Augustus, and from Mark Antony.

which he boasted (I quote his very words) that, *He had feasted his eyes on the spectacle of a dying enemy.*

Now not only was Blaesus a man of high birth and refined character, but he had also been firmly loyal to Vitellius. During the prosperous days of the party, when Caecina and other leaders of disaffection were falling away from him, Blaesus had turned a deaf ear to their solicitations. Pure and peaceful in his life, with no ambition for any novel distinction, least of all for the Principate, he had scarcely escaped being thought worthy of it.

Meantime Fabius Valens, moving with a vast and 40
effeminate train of concubines and eunuchs in a fashion too leisurely for war, was informed by rapid couriers that the fleet at Ravenna had been betrayed by Lucilius Bassus. Had he hastened his march, he might have come up with Caecina while still wavering, or overtaken the Legions before they committed themselves to a battle. Some advised him to avoid Ravenna, and march straight for Hostilia and Cremona by unfrequented by-ways, taking with him his most trusty troops; others thought he should call the Praetorian Cohorts from the city, and force his way through. But he let the time for action go by in vain delays and consultations; in the end, rejecting both counsels, he did what is the worst thing possible in times of difficulty—he adopted a middle course, lacking alike in courage and in caution.¹

March of
Fabius
Valens;

his fatal
tardiness.

¹ Henderson has pointed out in his note F (p. 348) the difficulty of understanding the movements of Valens as described by Tac. We must presume that he had got past Ariminum. He was evidently intending to march along the coast to Ravenna, where he would cooperate with the Vitellian fleet, and ultimately effect a junction with Caecina's

forces, now advanced to the lower Po. But the news of the defection of the fleet, and the consequent hostile occupation of Ravenna, made it impossible for him to advance any further on that road. One set of advisers suggested that he should march with a picked force to Hostilia and Cremona (that being the general line of Vitellian defence), taking

41 Writing to Vitellius for reinforcements, he received three Praetorian Cohorts¹ with a wing of British horse—a body too large to elude the enemy, and too small to break through. And even at this moment of danger, Valens gained an ill fame by indulgence in illicit pleasures, polluting, as was believed, the households of his hosts with adulteries and other wickedness; he had the power, he had the money, and he had the lusts which mark the last stage of falling fortunes.²

He writes to Rome for reinforcements;

The folly of his plan became evident when the horse and the foot arrived. His numbers were too small to attack the enemy, even had he been sure of their fidelity; and that was not beyond suspicion. For though the men hesitated as yet from a sense of shame, and out of respect for their General while he was with them, these restraints were not likely to last long with men who shrank from danger and were indifferent to disgrace. With this fear before him, he sent on³ his Praetorians to Ariminum, ordering a body of horse to protect their rear; while he himself, with a few companions whose fidelity was unshaken by disaster, turned aside into Umbria, and thence into Etruria. Hearing there the result of the battle at Cremona, he conceived a daring plan, which might have had dire results had it succeeded: he proposed

he sends his Praetorians to Ariminum, and slips away himself to Pisa and thence to Monaco.

a short cut by by-roads from somewhere short of Ravenna to the main Aemilian road at Faventia (*Faenza*), rather than waste time by going back to Ariminum. The other advice given was to wait for the Praetorians from Rome, and with their help force his way through Ravenna as originally intended, and joining Caecina, who was now encamped between the Po and the Adige.

¹ Tacitus only says 'cohorts'; but he means the Praetorian Cohorts. In the provinces, as we have seen, the

word 'cohorts,' standing by itself, denotes the auxiliaries; but in the subsequent narrative the word frequently stands for the Praetorian Cohorts, without the addition of the word 'Praetorian.'

² A fine phrase (*ruentis fortunae novissima libido*) to denote the last stage of moral recklessness which may be reached by a sensualist in falling fortunes.

³ The word *praemittit* is difficult; acc. to the view taken by Henderson, Valens would be *retiring* on Ariminum.

to seize some ships, effect a landing on some part of the Narbonese Province, summon up the armies and the tribes of Gaul to arms, and thus kindle the war anew.¹

The Flavians in possession of all Eastern Italy.

The departure of Valens took the heart out of the 42
garrison of Ariminum. Cornelius Fuscus brought up his forces, and disposing his Liburnian vessels along the adjoining shore, invested the place both by land and sea. He occupied also the level parts of Umbria, and that part of Picenum which is washed by the Adriatic, so that all Italy was now divided between Vespasian and Vitellius, the Apennines forming the dividing line.² Fabius Valens started from the bay of Pisa, but was forced by calms or adverse winds to put into the harbour of Hercules Monoecus.³ Close to this place was stationed Marius Maturus, Procurator of the Maritime Alps, who was true to Vitellius, and still remained faithful to his

¹ When the scanty reinforcements arrived from Rome (three Praetorian Cohorts and some British cavalry), the policy of forcing a way past Ravenna (*vadere per hostes*) was no longer practicable, and Valens appears to have contented himself with marching back to Ariminum without forming any subsequent plans. His placing cavalry in his rear shows that he believed, or affected to believe, that he would be pursued by an advancing enemy. But he had evidently given up all idea of taking the offensive; perhaps he received news that Caecina was in full retreat for Cremona. In any case, his desertion of his army and his flight with a small body over the Apennines of Umbria and Etruria was a counsel of despair.

² Thus the danger before which Valens retired was a real one. Cornelius Fuscus, an active and determined enemy of Vitellius (chap. 4), had been appointed to succeed Lucilius Bassus in command of the fleet at Ravenna. He at once adopted energetic measures, marching with what forces he had, backed by the fleet, to encounter Valens.

Valens had found it necessary to retreat before him, and had to surrender to the Flavians all the level country E. of the Apennines. Having loitered on till the time for forward action was past, he had lost the chance of joining Caecina. The exact dates cannot be given; but it is obvious that Cornelius Fuscus could not have begun his southward march along the coast until Caecina had broken up his camp on the Tartarus. Valens and his few followers hurried across one of the Apennine passes (see Henderson's account of these passes, pp. 208-210) and made his way to Pisa.

³ The harbour which thus took its name from a temple of Hercules Monoecus ('Hercules the Lone-dweller'), situated on a promontory close by (*arx Monoeci*, Virg. Aen. vi. 830), was the only good harbour in the west of Liguria. If under the circumstances of the modern Monaco Hercules 'the lone-dweller' has lost his old character as 'living in solitude,' he has at least kept up his ancient reputation as the God of windfalls and unexpected gains.

oath in spite of the hostility of the neighbourhood. This man welcomed Valens, but frightened him into giving up his rash project of invading Narbonese Gaul: the fidelity also of his companions gave way before their fears.

43 For the Procurator Valerius Paulinus, who was a vigorous soldier, and had been Vespasian's friend before his rise of fortune, had caused the cities in his neighbourhood to take the oath of allegiance to that Emperor; he had called out the Praetorians who had been discharged by Vitellius and were now voluntarily re-enlisting, and had garrisoned the Colony of Forum Julii,¹ which occupies a commanding position² upon the sea. His authority was all the greater that Forum Julii was his native place, and that the Praetorians respected him as a former Tribune in that body, while the townsmen themselves were zealous for the cause, not only out of favour for their fellow-citizens, but also in the hope of gaining influence in the future.

Valens captured at the Stoechades.

As soon as these strenuous measures, exaggerated by rumour, came to the ears of the wavering Vitellians, Fabius Valens retreated to his ships with four of his bodyguard, three private friends, and the same number of Centurions, Maturus and the rest preferring to remain behind and swear allegiance to Vespasian. But Valens felt that the sea would afford him safer refuge than either shore or cities; uncertain as to the future, and knowing better what to avoid than whom to trust, he was driven by bad weather on to some Massilian islands called the Stoechades,³

¹ The modern Fréjus.

² The phrase *claustra maris* is used of this harbour in exactly the same sense as that in which Egypt is called *claustra annonae* in chap. 8. It means that the position of the city with its

harbour gave it the command of the sea along that coast. See n. on chap. 8.

³ The present *Iles d'Hyères*. Though belonging to Marseilles, they were nearer to Toulon than to that city. The death of Valens is recorded in chap. 62.

where he was overpowered by some Liburnian vessels sent after him by Paulinus.

Spain,
Gaul, and
Britain
come over
to Ves-
pasian.

After the capture of Valens, the victorious side 44
received accessions in every quarter. A beginning was made in Spain by the 1st Legion (*Adiutrix*), which was hostile to Vitellius because of its attachment to Otho; it brought over with it the 6th and the 10th also. The Gallic Provinces were not slow to follow; and Britain was naturally favourable to Vespasian because of the distinction which he had there won in war when appointed by Claudius to the command of the 2nd Legion. Some trouble, however, occurred in the other Legions, which contained many Centurions and men who owed their promotion to Vitellius, and who had no mind to exchange a known Emperor for a new one.

Trouble
with Ve-
nutius in
Britain.

These dissensions, together with the constant 45
rumours of civil war, aroused the courage of the Britons, under the leadership of Venutius,¹ who was not only a man of naturally high courage, and a hater of the Roman name, but had also reasons of his own to inflame him against Cartimandua, Queen of the Brigantes. Great as she was in virtue of her high birth, she had gained an accession of power by the treacherous capture of King Caratacus, which had added to the triumph of Claudius its chief distinction. But wealth and prosperity brought evil ways along with them. Repudiating her husband Venutius, she admitted his armour-bearer Vellocatus to her bed and throne—an outrage which shook her house to its foundations. The people took the side of the husband; the paramour had with him the lust and

¹In Ann. xii. 40, where the events mentioned in this chapter are further narrated, Venutius is described as *prae-*

cipus scientia rei militaris, and as having long been faithful to Rome until he was divorced by Cartimandua.

savage temper of the Queen. Venutius called in allies to help; the Brigantes themselves revolted; and the Queen, reduced to extremities, appealed to the Romans for assistance. After battles of varied issue, she was saved by our auxiliaries of horse and foot. Venutius kept the kingdom; but the war was left with us.¹

46 Trouble arose in Germany about the same time; and what with the supineness of our Generals, the insubordination of the Legions, the attacks of foreign foes, and the disloyalty of our allies, Rome was well nigh brought to the ground. The causes and results of that war,² which was not disposed of in a day, I shall relate in the proper place. The Dacians also rose, a people whose fidelity is always doubtful, and whose fears were removed by the withdrawal of our army from Moesia. At the beginning, they looked on quietly; but when they heard that Italy was ablaze with war, and the whole empire divided against itself, they stormed the winter quarters of the auxiliary infantry and cavalry, took possession of both banks of the Danube, and were preparing to destroy the legionary camps.³

Serious trouble in Germany and with the Dacians.

But Mucianus had by this time heard of the victory at Cremona; and to prevent an irruption from two quarters at once—from Dacia and from Germany—he sent the 6th Legion against the Dacians. Thus once again did Fortune, as so often before, befriend the people of Rome, bringing Mucianus thither with the forces of the East, while, in the meantime, matters had been settled at Cremona. Fonteius Agrippa,

The Dacians crushed by Mucianus.

¹ The complete failure of the Roman expedition could hardly have been more pungently expressed.

² What he alludes to here is the formidable rebellion of Civilis, the

account of which is given below in book iv. chaps. 54-79, and in v. 14-26.

³ These were the various encampments of Roman troops distributed along the great frontier river.

who had for one year governed Asia¹ as Proconsul, was transferred to Moesia, being supplied with forces from the Vitellian army, since peace and policy alike required that that army should be dispersed throughout the Provinces, and kept engaged in foreign war.

Nor was there quiet among other nations. In 47 Pontus a barbarian slave of the name of Anicetus suddenly rose in arms. This man was a freedman of King Polemo² who had risen to great power, and had formerly commanded the royal fleet. Unable to endure the change by which the kingdom had been converted into a Province, he raised the tribes bordering on Pontus in the name of Vitellius. Seducing the needy by the hope of plunder, he collected a considerable following, and made a sudden attack upon Trapezus,³ an ancient and famous city founded by the Greeks on the extreme border of the Pontic kingdom. He there destroyed a cohort which had once formed part of the royal forces, and had afterwards been presented with the Roman franchise; but though adopting Roman arms, and carrying Roman standards, it had remained Greek in indolence and in license. He also burned the fleet; for as Mucianus had sent on the best of his Liburnian vessels with all their soldiers⁴ to Byzantium, there was no one to interfere with him by sea. The

Rising
headed in
Pontus by
a freedman
Anicetus;

¹ Asia, of course, means the Roman province of Asia, which included only the Western part of what we call Asia Minor as far as Phrygia, but not either Bithynia on the North, or Pamphylia in the South. Asia, being a senatorial province, was governed by proconsuls. See n. on Ann. i. 76.

² This Polemo was the second of two kings of that name who had enjoyed an uncertain tenure of the kingdoms of Pontus and Bosphorus in accordance with Roman caprice or exigencies. This Polemo (the Second) had been deposed

by Nero in the year A.D. 62 or 63, and his kingdom turned into a province.

³ The modern Trebizond, situated towards the E. extremity of the kingdom of Pontus, at the S.E. corner of the Black Sea. It had been founded in the year B.C. 756 from Sinope, itself a Milesian colony.

⁴ Here, as elsewhere, the 'soldiers' spoken of in connexion with the fleet were the *classarii* or marines, who had nothing to do with the navigation. The rowers (*remiges*) were a lower class, usually slaves.

barbarians had even the audacity to scour the seas with hastily constructed ships of their own called 'camarae.'¹ These vessels, broad in the beam, and low at the side, are put together without fastenings of brass or iron. When the sea rises, planks are added on at the top according to the height of the waves, until they are closed in as with a roof. In this manner they roll among the waves; and as they are as sharp at the stern as at the bow, and can be rowed both ways, they can put in to land with equal ease and safety at either end.²

48 When these things were brought to Vespasian's attention, he selected some detachments from his Legions, putting Virdius Geminus, an experienced officer, in command. Attacking the enemy when in disorder and dispersed in the pursuit of plunder, Virdius drove them back to their ships; then having rapidly constructed some Liburnian galleys, he came up with Anicetus at the mouth of the River Chobus, where he was under the protection of the King of the Sedochezi, whose alliance he had secured by presents and gifts of money. At first the King threatened to protect his suppliant by force of arms; but when a price was offered for his betrayal, with the alternative of war, he made terms for the death of Anicetus with the usual perfidy of barbarians, and delivered up the fugitives. So ended this servile war.

he is attacked,
betrayed,
and put to
death.

Vespasian was rejoicing at this victory, and at a flowing tide of success that surpassed his hopes, when he received in Egypt the news of the battle of Cremona. He at once hurried to Alexandria to put

On hearing
of Cre-
mona, Ves-
pasian
hurries to
Alexandria.

¹ The word *camara* (known in English under the form 'camera'), means properly 'an arch' or 'a vaulted roof'; here used of these roofed-in vessels.

² Ships of similar build formed part

of the flotilla with which Germanicus invaded Germany in A.D. 16 (*adpositis utrimque gubernaculis, converso ut repente remigio hinc vel illinc adpellerent*, Ann. ii. 6).

the pressure of famine on the broken forces of Vitellius, as well as upon Rome herself, so dependent upon foreign supplies. He proposed also to attack Africa,¹ which lies upon the same coast, both by land and sea; and by thus shutting off the supplies of corn, to produce want and dissension among the enemy.²

Reckless
conduct of
Antonius.

While the prize of Empire was being thus passed 49
on amid convulsions over the entire world, Primus Antonius ceased to be the blameless person that he had been before Cremona:³ either because he thought, now that the war was over, that all difficulties were at an end, or because prosperity, as so often happens with characters like his, brought to light his avarice, his insolence, and his other secret vices. He careered through Italy as if it had been a conquered country; he courted the Legions as if they were his own; in everything that he said or did, he was paving for himself a road to power. In order to train his soldiers in license, he allowed the Legions to fill up the places of the slain Centurions; they elected the most unruly of their number; and instead of the soldiers being under the control of their Generals, the Generals were dragged along by the violence of their soldiers. These disorderly proceedings, destructive of all discipline, Antonius turned to his own profit, giving no thought to the approach of Mucianus—a more fatal error than to have left Vespasian out of account.

¹ *I.e.* the Roman province of Africa, which occupied the central portion of the North African Coast, including Tripoli and Carthage, and was bounded by Mauretania on the West.

² It is a noteworthy circumstance that during these civil wars not one of the contending Emperors—Otho, Vitellius, or Vespasian—was present at any

of the battles by which the Empire was lost or won. How different from the earlier struggles for the *principatus*!

³ *I.e.* 'before the battle of Cremona.' We take the same liberty in English when we speak of something having happened 'before Trafalgar,' or 'after Waterloo.'

50 The winter being now at hand, and the low ground flooded by the Po, the army set out in light order, leaving behind at Verona the standards and eagles of the victorious Legions, the wounded and aged soldiers, together with many who were unwounded. The auxiliary cavalry and infantry, it was thought, with men selected¹ from the Legions, would suffice for a war which was now virtually over. These were joined by the 11th Legion,² which at first had hesitated to come over; but now that victory was won, it felt uneasy that it had held back. There were also 6000 men recently levied in Dalmatia, under the command of a Consular, Pompeius Silvanus,³ a sluggard in war who would waste in words the time needed for action; but the real direction was in the hands of Annius Bassus, the Legate of the Legion. This man guided Silvanus under a show of deference, and was always at hand with unobtrusive vigilance whenever anything had to be done. In addition to the above forces, the pick of the marines⁴ from the fleet of Ravenna, who had clamoured to be enrolled in a Legion, had been brought up, their places in the fleet being supplied by Dalmatians.

The Flavian army sets out for Rome;

The army and its leaders halted at Fanum Fortunae,⁵ undecided as to their plan of action. They

it halts at Fanum Fortunae.

¹ The phrase *e legionibus lecti* may mean nothing more than detachments or portions of legions, the *vexilla* which have been so often mentioned.

² A Dalmatian legion: sent back there by Vitellius after the first battle of Bedriacum (ii. 11 and 67).

³ Governor of Dalmatia: he was 'old and wealthy' (ii. 86); see also Ann. xiii. 52. Dalmatia corresponded to some extent with the modern Albania, so prominent in the recent Balkan War.

⁴ The *classici* or *classarii* were trained as soldiers; they are constantly called *milites* (chap. 12), and hence

could readily be formed into a legion. See n. on chap. 47.

⁵ Fanum Fortunae (the modern *Fano*) was on the sea coast, near the mouth of the Metaurus, about halfway between Ariminum and Ancona. It was at this point that the great Via Flaminia struck inland, mounting the valley of the Metaurus up to a height of 2400 feet above the sea, whence it descended to Fulginium (*Foligno*), and thence to the valley of the Nar at Narnia (*Narni*), where it took a straight line across the Tiber to Falerii and so to Rome.

had learned that the Praetorians had marched from Rome, and presumed that they had occupied the passes of the Apennines; they were in a region impoverished by war, and they were alarmed by the seditious demands of the men for a 'clavarium'¹—a name given to a particular kind of donative. They had provided neither corn nor money, and the efforts to obtain them were frustrated by the impatient greed of the soldiers, who plundered the stores which might have been served out to them.

A grievous incident.

I find it recorded by the best authorities that so 51
insensible were the victors to right and wrong that a private horse-soldier claimed a reward from the Generals for having slain his own brother in the late battle; and though human law² forbade them to honour such an act, military policy did not permit them to punish it. The man was put off on the plea that his services were too great to be recompensed at once, and nothing more is related of the matter.

A similar crime had been committed in a previous civil war; for Sisenna³ records how in the battle against Cinna⁴ on the Janiculum a Pompeian soldier killed his own brother, and on discovering what he had done, killed himself: so much greater among our

¹ Lit. 'shoe-money,' or rather 'hob-nail money,' from *clavus*, a nail. The Roman soldier's shoes were studded with nails, and the name *clavarium* was given to a kind of donative given to the men under pretence of supplying them with nails for their shoes.

² *Ius hominum*, a phrase coined by Tac. in imitation of the famous phrase *ius gentium* ('law of nations'), which played so important a part in the development of Roman law. Like Horace, Tac. understands the art of manufacturing a phrase which shall bear a sufficient resemblance to some phrase in common or technical use to suggest at once the appropriate associations.

³ L. Cornelius Sisenna was praetor in B.C. 78, and died in Crete B.C. 67, while serving as a legate under Pompey during his war against the pirates. He wrote a history of his own times, which according to Sallust was not to be commended for its style of treatment (*non libero ore*, Jug. 95).

⁴ Referring to the year B.C. 87, when Cinna, permitted by Sulla to be elected consul on condition of proposing no revolutionary changes, at once broke his word, was driven out of the city, summoned Marius to his help, captured the city with his assistance, and ordered the massacre of Sulla's partisans.

ancestors was the honour paid to virtue, and the penitence felt for wrong-doing. Such and such-like stories of a former time I shall deem it not unfitting to relate whenever circumstance or place shall suggest a noble example, or afford solace for present ills.

52 Antonius and the other Generals now resolved to send on cavalry to explore Umbria, so as to discover some easy passage over the Apennines;¹ they ordered the eagles and standards and all the troops remaining at Verona to be brought up, while the sea and the Po were to swarm with convoys.² Some of the Generals, however, contrived delays; for Antonius had become overbearing, and they felt more sure of rewards from Mucianus. Mucianus himself was by no means pleased with so speedy a victory, thinking that he would lose all the glory of the war if he were not present at the taking of the city. So he kept writing ambiguously to Primus and to Varus, now urging the necessity for prompt action, and then again the advantages of delay, in such carefully constructed phrases that, according as things turned out well or ill, he might either take credit for a success, or disclaim a failure.

Mucianus sends ambiguous instructions;

To Plotius Grypus, who had lately been admitted into the Senate by Vespasian and appointed to the command of a Legion, as well as to others whom he could trust, Mucianus wrote more frankly; they wrote back answers according to his mind, blaming

¹ It was so long since an enemy had ventured to penetrate the Apennine passes that all measures for their defence, or even for their exploration, seem to have been neglected. The Roman War Office seems to have known as little of the topography of central Italy as our own did of the geography of the Transvaal before the Boer war. See Henderson's interesting

account, *Civil War*, pp. 209-212.

² In spite of the great victory at Cremona, the Flavian army was by no means in a good position. Short of supplies and disorganised, afraid at first to take the Flamian highway to Rome which a comparatively small force might have blocked against them, they found their salvation in the supineness of Vitellius and his advisers.

he dis-
parages the
services of
Antonius.

Primus and Varus for their precipitancy. These letters were sent on to Vespasian; with the result that the ideas and actions of Antonius were judged in a manner very different from his expectation.

Resent-
ment of
Antonius;

This Antonius could ill endure; and he put it down 53 to the incriminations of Mucianus that his dangers were so slightly valued. Intemperate of speech, unused to control, he did not spare his language; and he wrote to Vespasian in terms too presumptuous to be addressed to an Emperor, conveying a covert attack upon Mucianus:—

he writes to
Vespasian,
narrating
all his
services.

It was he—Antonius—who had brought the Pannonian Legions into the field; it was he that had stirred up the Generals in Moesia; it was his resolute action that had burst through the Alps,¹ occupied Italy, intercepted the succours from Germany and from Raetia. The splendid feat of flinging a whirlwind of cavalry upon the Vitellian Legions when scattered and quarrelling among themselves, and then routing them with his infantry in a battle continued through day and night, was his and his alone. What had happened at Cremona was an accident of war; the civil wars of former days had cost Rome greater losses, and the destruction of more cities. It was not by couriers and dispatches, but by his own right arm and sword, that he had done battle for his Emperor. He did not detract from the glory of those who had meanwhile tranquillised Dacia: their aim had been the peace of Moesia; his, the safety and security of Italy; and it was due to his instances that the Provinces of Gaul and Spain—the most powerful countries in the world²—had

¹ There is some exaggeration in the use of the word *perruptions* here. There had been no enemy and no very formidable natural difficulties to encounter, in the passes between Poetovio and Aquileia. The distance was about 150 miles. The Moesian legions had much

further to come. Their headquarters at Naissus (*Nissa*) were some 400 miles from Poetovio. See Henderson, p. 37.

² Here, as in other passages, the Roman Empire is spoken of as 'the world.' In the eyes of a Roman nothing else counted.

come over to Vespasian. And yet these labours would all go for nothing if none were to reap the rewards of peril but those who had kept out of it.

These complaints were not unknown to Mucianus ; hence a deadly hatred between the two. Antonius expressed it openly ; Mucianus nursed it with more craft, and therefore the more implacably.

54 After the wreck of his fortunes at Cremona, Vitellius sought to suppress all tidings of the disaster, thus foolishly delaying, not his misfortunes, but the remedy for them. Had he acknowledged the truth, and taken counsel, he had still chances and forces left ; whereas the false pretence that all was well only made bad things worse. Not a word was uttered in his presence about the war ; the citizens were prohibited from speaking of it ; and therefore many reports, exaggerated for the worse, were given out by men who would have told the truth had it not been forbidden to them.

Inaction of Vitellius ; he ignores and stifles the truth.

Nor did the enemy's Generals fail to magnify rumour, conducting some of the captured Vitellian scouts to see the strength of the victorious army, and then sending them back. Vitellius secretly interrogated all these men, and then ordered them to be put to death. Singular hardihood was shown by a Centurion called Julius Agrestis. Having in vain attempted, in divers conversations, to rouse the Emperor's courage, he induced Vitellius to send him as a messenger to see the enemy's forces, and ascertain what had happened at Cremona. The man made no attempt to keep his observations secret from Antonius ; he informed him of the Emperor's orders, and of his own purpose, and asked to be allowed to see everything. Men were told off to show him the scene of the battle

Hardihood of the centurion Julius Agrestis.

the remains of Cremona, and the captured Legions. On his return, Vitellius refused to believe his report; and even accused him of having been bribed. '*Since you require some great proof,*' answered Agrestis, '*and as you have no further use for me, whether dead or alive, I will give you something to believe.*' Parting thus from Vitellius, he made good his words by putting an end to himself. Some say that Vitellius ordered him to be put to death; but all agree as to the loyalty and determination of the man.

Vitellius at last sends troops to hold the Apennines,

And now Vitellius, as though roused from sleep, 55 ordered Julius Priscus and Alfenus Varus¹ to occupy the Apennine passes with fourteen Praetorian Cohorts and the whole of the cavalry; after these followed a naval Legion. Under any other leader than Vitellius, a force of so many thousands in arms, made up of picked men and horses, would have been strong enough to take the offensive. The remaining Cohorts were given to the Emperor's brother Lucius, for the protection of the city. Vitellius himself gave up none of his luxurious habits; but with a haste bred of alarm, he hurried on the elections, designating Consuls for many years; he granted treaties to allies, lavished Latin rights on foreigners, remitted tribute to some, conferred exemptions upon others—played havoc, in short, with the Empire, without a thought for the future. The multitude opened their mouths wide for such grand benefactions; fools paid money for them; wise men did not believe in benefits which could neither be given nor received without ruin to the state.

and enters their camp

Yielding at last to the clamour of the army, which

¹ These were the two prefects in joint command of the Praetorian Cohorts (*praefecti praetorio*),

had established itself at Mevania,¹ Vitellius made his entry into the camp accompanied by a huge train of Senators, some drawn by their hopes, a greater number by their fears; while he himself, with no mind of his own, was at the mercy of perfidious counsellors.

at Me-
vania.

56 Here a marvellous thing occurred. As he was addressing the army, a flight of ill-omened birds passed like a cloud over his head, obscuring the light of day.² There was another dire omen also: a bull escaped from the altar, and after scattering the preparations for the sacrifice was slain at some distance, and in a manner different from that usually observed with victims.³ But the greatest portent of all was Vitellius himself. Knowing nothing of war, incapable of thinking for himself, he kept asking others how a line of battle should be formed,⁴ how scouting should be done, to what extent it would be wise to hurry on or to protract the war; his face, his gait, showed alarm as each new messenger arrived; and finally, he was for ever in his cups.

Dire omens
occur.

At last he tired of the camp; and on hearing of the defection of the fleet at Misenum, he returned to Rome, terror-stricken by each fresh blow, without a thought for the situation as a whole. For whereas it had been open to him to cross the Apennines with

Hearing of
the defec-
tion of the
fleet at
Misenum,
Vitellius
returns to
Rome.

¹ Thus Vitellius was already too late to block the narrow and difficult passes by which the Flaminian road crosses the Apennines. Even here much might have been done to check the Flavian army as it debouched from the hills. Henderson states that the weight of modern strategic opinion is in favour of a defensive army waiting to receive an invading enemy at the foot of a mountain barrier, rather than of itself occupying the mountain passes against him (pp. 43-45).

² Dio records this omen with some

amplifications (lxv. 16); he says the birds were vultures.

³ Cp. the similar unfavourable omen that occurred to the unlucky Paetus when crossing the Euphrates for his disastrous invasion of Armenia (Ann. xv. 7).

⁴ *Ordo agminis* does not mean here the 'order of march,' but the mode of drawing up a line for battle. So in ii. 41 of the casting of lots for station in the battle (*dum legiones de ordine agminis sortiuntur*).

the entire strength of his army, and attack the enemy when worn out by winter and by want, he dispersed his forces, and so left his brave soldiers, who would have resisted to the death, to be butchered or captured—and that contrary to the judgment of his most experienced Centurions, who would have told him the truth had they been consulted.¹ But they were kept away from him by his inner circle of friends; and his ears were so constructed that they were offended by all profitable counsels, and open to none save such as were pleasant and pernicious.

The fleet at Misenum—so much can be effected 57
by one man's audacity in time of civil discord—was brought over to Vespasian by a Centurion named Claudius Faventinus, who had been ignominiously dismissed by Galba, and who produced forged letters from Vespasian promising rewards to deserters. The fleet was under the command of Claudius Apollinaris,² a man as doubtful in loyalty as he was ir- resolute in treachery; but the deserters found a leader in a man of Praetorian rank named Apinius Tiro,³ who happened to be quartered at Minturnae at the time. These two men stirred up the municipal and colonial towns, of which Puteoli warmly embraced the cause of Vespasian, while Capua remained true to Vitellius—each city mixing up with the Civil War its own municipal jealousies. With a view to pleasing

How the
fleet at
Misenum
was
brought
over.

¹ It is idle in view of this passage to say that Tac. has no understanding of strategy. The mistakes of the Vitellian campaign of defence could hardly have been more tersely or more correctly described.

² Lucilius Bassus, who betrayed the fleet of Ravenna to the Flavians, had been placed by Vitellius in command of both fleets, that of Misenum as well as that at Ravenna. Apollinaris must therefore have been recently appointed,

after the defection of Bassus. The Claudius Julianus mentioned below as having recently commanded the fleet at Misenum must have been under the orders of Bassus.

³ This man seems to have held a command in S. Italy with Misenum as headquarters. See further chap. 76, where it is stated that he had used his position to squeeze money out of the towns under his protection.

the soldiers, Vitellius gave the command of the fleet to Claudius Julianus, a man who had filled the same post in an indulgent fashion not long before. One Urban Cohort was sent out to him as a support, in addition to some gladiators who were under his command. But no sooner did the two bodies join than Julianus went over to Vespasian, and the combined forces occupied Terracina, a town whose security depended more on its position and its walls than on the character of the garrison.

58 When these events became known to Vitellius, he sent his brother Lucius with six cohorts and 500 cavalry to confront the war now threatened in Campania, leaving the rest of his army at Narnia under the Praetorian Prefects.¹ Sick at heart, he was comforted by the ardour of his soldiers, and by the clamour of the populace for arms—for he gave the fine names of ‘army’ and of ‘Legions’ to a cowardly mob whose courage would evaporate in words. On the advice of his freedmen (for the more illustrious his friends, the less were they to be trusted), he ordered an assembly of the Tribes, and swore in all who gave in their names; great numbers pouring in, he divided the charge of the levy between the two Consuls. He then made a requisition upon the Senators for a given

Lucius Vitellius sent into Campania.

Vitellius seeks to arm the populace ;

¹ Thus Vitellius committed the last mistake which was open to him, and divided his remaining army into two, and indeed into three, portions, none of them strong enough to offer resistance even in the most favourable positions. The news of the defection of the fleet at Misenum had made him leave Mevania for Rome (chap. 56), taking with him, it would seem, seven Praetorian Cohorts out of the fourteen originally sent to Mevania. The army thus reduced retreated to Narnia, where a narrow ravine in the river Nar offered the last defensible position on the way to Rome ; and no sooner had Vitellius reached

Rome with his seven cohorts, than the news of the rising in Campania filled him with a fresh terror. He at once sent off his brother Lucius with six of his remaining cohorts to quell a movement which was of no importance in itself, and was sufficiently provided for by the divisions among the Campanians themselves. When the Praetorians set out for Mevania, only two cohorts had been left behind in the city : Vitellius having now sent off six out of the seven which he brought back from Mevania, three cohorts alone remain for the defence of Rome. See Henderson, p. 217, note.

number of slaves, and a certain weight of silver ; the Knights made proffers of service or of money ; even freedmen made voluntary offerings of the same kind. This pretence of loyalty had its origin in fear ; but it turned into sympathy and a feeling of compassion, not so much for Vitellius himself, as for the lamentable position into which the Principate had fallen. Vitellius did all that looks, voice, and tears could do to draw out this feeling, being generous, indeed extravagant, in his promises, as frightened men naturally are. He even desired to be styled 'Caesar,' a title which he had declined before, but for which he now felt a kind of superstitious reverence, paying as much attention (as a man in fear will do) to the talk of the mob as to the counsels of the wise.

but the attempt comes to nothing.

But as all hasty ill-considered measures, however successful at the beginning, come to nothing in course of time, so by degrees Senators and Knights slunk away ; hesitatingly at first, and when he was not there to see, but ere long with contemptuous indifference ; until at last Vitellius, ashamed at the vain attempt, dispensed with services which were no longer offered.

Disastrous effect of the retreat from Mevania.

Just as the occupation of Mevania had struck 59 terror into Italy, as though the war were to be begun afresh, so now the cowardly retreat of Vitellius produced a marked enthusiasm for the Flavian cause. The Samnites, the Pelignians, and the Marsians, stung with jealousy at having been anticipated by Campania, proffered every kind of service for the war with the eagerness of men serving a new master. The army suffered much from severe wintry weather in crossing the Apennines ; and as they had difficulty in struggling through the snows unopposed, it was evident in what peril they would

The Flavian army crosses the Apennines ;

have been if Vitellius had not been turned back by that same good fortune which befriended the Flavian leaders not less frequently than the excellence of their counsels.

They were here met by Petilius Cerialis,¹ who in the dress of a rustic, and through his knowledge of the country, had eluded the Vitellian outposts. Cerialis was nearly related to Vespasian, and had a high military reputation; so he was admitted among the leaders of the party. Many authorities relate that Flavius Sabinus² also and Domitian might have made their escape from Rome; messengers from Antonius made their way through to them under various disguises, suggesting opportunities of escape and offering protection. Sabinus excused himself on the score of health:—*He had neither the strength nor the daring for the attempt.* Domitian was willing enough to escape, but guards had been set over him by Vitellius; and though they offered to accompany him in his flight, he was afraid they might be laying some plot for him. And indeed Vitellius himself, having regard to his own relations, had no thought of using violence against Domitian.

it is joined
by Petilius
Cerialis.

60 Arriving at Carsulæ,³ the Flavian leaders took a few days' rest till the eagles and standards should come up.⁴ The situation was excellent for a camp: it

The Fla-
vian leaders
rest at
Carsulæ.

¹ This able officer had commanded the 9th legion in Britain in A.D. 61, when it was all but destroyed by the insurgent Britons (Ann. xiv. 32). We shall hear in Books iv. and v. how he succeeded at length in crushing the Batavian rebellion. The word *illic* no doubt means 'on emerging from the pass over the Apennines.'

² Flavius Sabinus, Vespasian's elder brother, now prefect of the city. After the death of Otho, he had administered to the troops in Rome the oath of allegiance to Vitellius (ii. 55).

³ This town, now a village (*Casigliano*), was on the main road from Mevania to Narnia. There was also another slightly longer road, along the valley of the Clitumnus and passing through Spolegium and Interamna, by which the Flavians might have advanced.

⁴ The eagles and the *vexilla* had been left at Verona; but Antonius had ordered them to follow him up as soon as he started for the passage of the Apennines (chap. 52).

had a wide outlook; it was secure for the gathering of supplies, having wealthy cities in the rear; and as the Vitellians were only ten miles distant, it offered hopes of colloquies and desertions. But this was not to the mind of the soldiers; they wanted not peace, but victory. They would not even wait for their own Legions, as though these would be sharing in the plunder rather than in the danger. So Antonius summoned them to an assembly and told them that :—

Antonius
advises
caution.

Vitellius had still an army which might waver on reflection, but would be formidable in despair. The beginnings of a civil war had to be left to chance; but wise counsels alone could bring victory in the end. The fleet at Misenum, and the fair region of Campania, had revolted from Vitellius; there was nothing now left to him out of the whole world but the country between Narnia and Terracina. They had won glory enough by the battle at Cremona, and more than enough of odium by its destruction. Let it be their ambition to save Rome, rather than to capture it. They would gain greater rewards, and by far the greater glory, if they could secure, without bloodshed, the safety of the Senate and the People of Rome.

By these and such-like words were the soldiers pacified.

Many
Vitellian
officers
desert; the
Praetorian
com-
manders
return to
Rome.

Soon after this the Legions arrived. Alarmed by 61 the report of this increase to the army, the Vitellian cohorts began to waver. No one urged them to fight, and desertion was counselled by many who were keen to take over their centuries and squadrons as a present to the victors, in hopes of future favours to themselves. These persons informed the Flavians that the town of Interamna close by was

occupied by a garrison of four hundred horse. Varus¹ was immediately sent off with a light-armed force against them. The few who offered resistance were slain; the majority threw away their arms and asked for pardon; some fled to the camp, where to soften the disgrace of having abandoned their post they terrified everyone by exaggerated reports of the valour and number of the enemy. Misconduct met with no punishment among the Vitellians; the rewards offered for desertion broke down allegiance, and no rivalry remained except in perfidy. Tribunes and Centurions deserted in large numbers; but the common soldiers remained staunchly faithful to Vitellius, until at last Priscus and Alfenus abandoned the camp and returned to Vitellius, relieving everyone of the shame of treachery.²

62 About the same time Fabius Valens was put to death while under custody at Urbinum.³ His head was exhibited to the Vitellian Cohorts to put an end to their hopes; for they believed that Valens had made his way into Germany, and was there raising levies both of old soldiers and of new. The sight turned them to despair; but the Flavian army heard of the death with unbounded satisfaction, as though it brought the war to an end.

Valens was born of an equestrian family at Anagnia;⁴ dissolute of life, with fair abilities, he sought by ribaldry to gain a name for wit. Compelled by Nero, as he pretended, to act in the *Juvenalia*,⁵ he afterwards, of his own will, played parts in

Death of
Fabius
Valens;

his history
and cha-
racter.

¹ This is the active officer, Arrius Varus, who shared with Antonius the daring march into Italy via Aquileia.

² The two commanders remained faithful and returned to Vitellius; but their abandonment of the army gave the signal for the desertion of those who

remained.

³ Urbinum (*Urbino*) a town in Upper Umbria, famous as the birthplace of the painter Raphael.

⁴ Anagnia (*Anagni*) in E. Latium, in the country of the ancient Hernici.

⁵ Instituted by Nero in A.D. 59 and

mimes with more drollery than decency. As legionary Legate, he had at once encouraged and defamed Verginius. Fonteius Capito he first corrupted and then killed; or perhaps killed because he had failed to corrupt him.¹ A traitor to Galba, but faithful to Vitellius, he gained honour from the perfidy of others.²

The Vitellian army surrenders.

Hope thus cut off on every side, the Vitellian 63 soldiers prepared to pass over to the other party; to do which without loss of honour, they marched down under their standards and ensigns into the plains below Narnia. The Flavian army, drawn up and armed as if for battle,³ stood in close column on each side of the road. The Vitellians were brought in between, and when thus surrounded, were kindly addressed by Antonius. Part were ordered to remain at Narnia, part at Interamna; with them were left some of the victorious Legions, to deal gently with them if tractable, to overawe them if refractory.

Overtures made to Vitellius.

During this time Antonius and Varus did not fail to send many messages to Vitellius, offering him his life, with wealth and a retreat in Campania, if he would lay down his arms, and surrender himself and his children to Vespasian. Mucianus also wrote in the same strain; and Vitellius himself was half inclined to trust these promises, discussing what number

made an occasion for much debauchery (Ann. xiv. 15). Dio says that the original idea was to celebrate the first cutting of the beard (lxi. 19, 1).

¹ It will be remembered that Fonteius Capito had been governor of Lower Germany. Cornelius Aquinus and Fabius Valens commanded single legions under him, and had him put to death without orders from Galba (i. 7). In i. 52 Tac. expresses the same doubt as to the motives of Valens as in the passage before us: but here he adds that

Valens had first supported Verginius, and afterwards denounced him to Galba. It was for this service that Valens thought Galba had not been sufficiently grateful (i. 52).

² Compare the character of Valens as given in i. 66. Tac. means here that he was exceeded in treachery by Caecina.

³ Reading with F. *intentus armatusque*. M has *ornatusque* with *armatus* in the margin. *Ornatus* would mean 'wearing their decorations.'

of slaves to have, which place on the coast to choose; and such was the torpor that possessed him that he would have forgotten that he had been an Emperor had he not been reminded of it by others.

64 At Rome, meanwhile, the leading men were secretly urging Flavius Sabinus, Prefect of the city, to take his share in the victory and the glory:—

Flavius Sabinus is urged to seize the city;

He had a force of his own in the City Cohorts;¹ he could depend upon the corps of watchmen,² and their own slaves; the fortune of the party was with him, and victory made all things easy. Let him not give up the glory to Antonius and to Varus. Vitellius had only a few Cohorts left, and they were disheartened by bad news from every quarter. The popular mind was quick to turn; if Sabinus came forth to lead, those same flatteries would be poured upon Vespasian. Vitellius could scarce hold his own even when fortune favoured; now that she was failing him, he was lost. The credit of ending the war would be with the man who should hold the city; it was meet for Sabinus to save the Empire for his brother, meet for Vespasian to put no man above Sabinus.

65 Infirm and old, Sabinus listened with anything but eagerness to these suggestions; some secretly accused him of envy and jealousy, as though not wishing to push his brother's fortunes. For Sabinus was the elder of the two brothers; when both were private citizens, he had been the more prominent in wealth and position; and he was thought to have given but scant help³ to Vespasian when in difficulties,

he hesitates,

¹ The *cohortes urbanae*, originally three in number as instituted by Augustus, had been increased by Vitellius to four at the same time that he increased the number of the Praetorian Cohorts to sixteen (ii. 93). The urban cohorts were under the command of the *praefectus urbi*; hence the words used

above (*esse illi proprium militem*).

² The body of *vigiles* or night watchmen consisted of seven cohorts: these were not under the *praefectus urbi*, but had a commander of their own (*praefectus vigilum*).

³ Reading *parce iuvisse* with Halm and F. instead of the unintelligible

taking mortgages over his house and lands. Thus, although the two brothers were outwardly on good terms, it was feared that there was ill feeling below.

It would be more true,¹ perhaps, to say that Sabinus was a man of gentle nature, averse to blood and slaughter; and that that was the reason for the frequent colloquies which he held with Vitellius as to conditions of peace and the laying down of arms. They had frequent meetings in their own houses; and at last, as report had it, came to terms in the Temple of Apollo. Two witnesses—Cluvius Rufus and Silius Italicus²—heard all that passed between them.³ Those further off noted the faces of the negotiators: that of Vitellius bore an abject and mean expression, Sabinus wore a look of pity rather than of triumph.

Now had Vitellius been able to turn the minds of 66 his followers as easily as he gave way himself, the Flavian armies would have entered the city without bloodshed. But his most loyal followers protested that:—

To agree to terms of peace would be to accept dishonour without safety; they would have nothing to trust to but the conqueror's good pleasure. Vespasian would never disdain⁴ Vitellius so far as to tolerate him in a private

præiuisse of M. Vespasian found himself in money difficulties on his return from his proconsular command in Africa (Suet. Vesp. 4), and his brother, instead of liberally assisting him, had taken mortgages for the amount over all his properties.

¹ The meaning of *melior interpretatio* is doubtful. It may mean either a 'kinder' or a 'juster' view of the case; probably the latter.

² It is interesting that two illustrious men of letters should have been parties, or at least witnesses, to these transactions. Cluvius Rufus was governor of Spain under Galba, and came over to Vitellius after Galba's death. He wrote a history of his own times, from

which Tacitus and the other historians seem to have borrowed. He is referred to by Tac. in Ann. xiii. 20 and xiv. 2 as an authority for the reign of Nero. Silius Italicus, author of the great epic in 17 books called *Punica* (he lived from about 25 to 100 A.D.), was consul in the year of Nero's death (A.D. 68), and therefore must now have been one of the leading senators.

³ In the phrase *verba vocesque, verba* would seem to refer to the actual words used, *voces* to the general sense of what was said. *Vox* is the regular word to use of 'a saying' comprised in one sentence.

⁴ The meaning of the word *superbia* here is hard to render. The context

and negotiates with Vitellius for his abdication.

But the friends of Vitellius protest,

station : even the conquered party would not endure it, and their compassion would be a source of danger for Vespasian.¹ Vitellius, doubtless, was an old man : he had had his full share of good things and of evil : but what of his son Germanicus ? What name, what position, would be his ?

Money indeed and slaves were now offered him, and a luxurious retreat in Campania ; but once Vespasian had laid his hands on Empire, neither he himself, nor his friends, nor even his armies, would feel safe so long as a rival was alive. Fabius Valens, who had been kept a prisoner to await what chance might bring, had been deemed too powerful to live : what option in regard to Vitellius would be open to Antonius, to Fuscus, or to that choice sample of the party, Mucianus, but to put him to death ? Julius Caesar had not spared Pompey, nor Augustus Antony : unless indeed Vespasian—who had been a client² of Vitellius when a Vitellius³ shared the Consulship with Claudius—had a soul more magnanimous than theirs. Nay rather, let him find arms and courage in despair, as became his father's Censorship—as became the three Consulships and all the honours of his illustrious house. His soldiers were still true to him ; the people adored him ; and, finally, no end more terrible could await him than that towards which they were rushing of their own free will. They must die, if conquered ; they must die if they surrendered ; all that mattered was whether they should draw their last breath in valorous combat, or amid jeers and ignominy.

and urge
him rather
to die in
arms.

seems to show that it refers to the necessities of Vespasian's position if he came to Rome as a conqueror. He would not occupy such a position of undoubted security that he could with safety ignore Vitellius.

¹ The Vitellian party, even if conquered, would retain a loyalty (Tac. calls it compassion) for their chief which would be a constant source of danger to Vespasian.

² The word *cliens* is used here in an irregular sense to denote that Vitellius had at some time done a service to Vespasian which put him under an obligation to him.

³ The allusion is to Lucius Vitellius, father of the Emperor, who had been colleague of Claudius in the consulship in A.D. 43 and 47 ; he had also been his colleague as censor from A.D. 47 to 52.

But Vitellius turned a deaf ear to all manly 67
counsels. His mind was overwhelmed by a piteous
anxiety for his wife and children, who might be ex-
posed to the conqueror's wrath by too obstinate a
resistance. He had also an aged mother :¹ she, how-
ever, died opportunely, a few days before the downfall
of her house, having reaped nothing but sorrow and
a good name from the Principate of her son.

On the
18th of
December
Vitellius
quits the
Palace, as
if to abdi-
cate,

On the 18th of December, after hearing of the
defection and surrender of the Legion and the
cohorts at Narnia, Vitellius quitted the Palace, in
mourning apparel, with his sorrowing household
around him: his little son was carried in a litter, as
if in a funeral procession. The mob received him
with ill-timed shouts of flattery; the soldiers in angry
silence.

a piteous
and con-
temptible
spectacle.

No man could be so insensible to human affairs 68
as not to be touched by that spectacle: that of a
Roman Emperor, lord but lately of the human race,
quitting the seat of his high fortunes, and passing
through the people and the city, having left his
sovereignty behind. No one had seen, no one had
heard of, a thing like this. The Dictator Caesar
had been overcome by sudden violence; Gaius² had
been the victim of a secret conspiracy; Nero's flight
had been shrouded by night, and by the obscurity of

¹ Her name was Sextilia, to which Vitellius added the title of 'Augusta' (ii. 89). For her noble and simple character see ii. 64. Suet. describes her as *probatissima nec ignobilis femina* (Vit. 3). The account given of the mother and wife of Vitellius, how they kept themselves utterly aloof from his doings as Emperor, and refused to make the slightest change in their simple private life, is one of the most pleasing touches in the *Histories*. Amid all the wickedness and profligacy of Rome we

get glimpses from time to time of the noble part played by the Roman matron in ordering her household, and in fashioning the character of her family. There are few more touching and illustrative things in Roman literature than the ideal of Roman matronhood as portrayed in the Cornelia of Propertius.

² Gaius (commonly called Caligula) was slain A.D. 41 in an underground passage of the palace by the tribune Cassius Chaerea. For an account of that conspiracy see Suet. Cal. 56-58.

a country house ;¹ Piso and Galba had fallen as if in battle : whereas now Vitellius—in an assembly of his own people, with his own soldiers around him, with even women looking on—could only utter a few doleful words appropriate to his present case, to the effect that, *He was retiring for the sake of peace and the public good : let them only hold him in remembrance, and have compassion upon his brother and his wife and his innocent young children.*

As he spoke, he held out to them his son, commending him now to one and now to all ; at last, when almost choked by his tears, he drew a dagger from his side, and handed it to the Consul Caecilius Simplex,² who was standing by, as though he were giving up the right of life and death over the citizens. The Consul refused to take it ; the crowd raised shouts of disapproval, and Vitellius moved away, as though to place the insignia of Empire in the Temple of Concord,³ and retire to his brother's house,⁴ when still louder cries arose, protesting against his going to a private house :—*He must go back to the Palace.* Every way was barred except that leading to the Via Sacra ; and so, being at his wit's end, to the Palace he returned.⁵

He is forced to return to it.

69 Here a rumour that he was resigning the Empire had arrived before him ; and Flavius Sabinus had sent written instructions to the Tribunes of the Cohorts⁶

Meeting in the house of Sabinus.

¹ Nero killed himself in the suburban villa of his freedman Phaon four miles from Rome on the Salarian road (Suet. Nero 48).

² Caecilius Simplex was *cos. suf.* for the months of November and December ; for the suspicion raised against him in the Senate, see ii. 60.

³ The famous temple of Concord built on the *Clivus Capitolinus* by Camillus in B.C. 367 to signalise the reconciliation of the orders. This

temple was a not uncommon meeting-place of the Senate.

⁴ This house, as we learn from chap. 70 below, overlooked the Forum, so he had not far to go.

⁵ It would not be easy to match the pathos with which the story of chaps. 67 and 68 is told.

⁶ These were Praetorian Cohorts ; hut Vitellius had drafted so many of the German soldiers into them that Tac. speaks of them as German.

to keep in the soldiers. And so, just as if the whole commonwealth had thrown itself into Vespasian's arms, the leading Senators, many Knights, and the whole of the Urban Cohorts and the Night Guard, crowded into the house of Flavius Sabinus. He was there informed of the feeling of the populace, and of the threatening attitude of the German Cohorts ;¹ but he had now gone too far to draw back, and the others, each fearing for himself that, if dispersed and thereby weakened, they might be attacked by the Vitellians, urged him much against his will to resort to arms.

Skirmish
between
Vitellians
and the
followers of
Sabinus ;

But as usually happens in such cases, while everyone was ready with advice, few would face the danger ; and when Sabinus with his armed attendants was descending by the pool of Fundanus,² he was encountered by a resolute body of Vitellians. This chance collision ended in a kind of battle, in which the Vitellians had the best of it ; and Sabinus, in the alarm of the moment, did the best thing he could by occupying the Capitol³ with a body of soldiers, mixed with some Senators and Knights whose names cannot

Sabinus oc-
cupies the
Capitol
and is be-
sieged.

¹ *I.e.* the three Praetorian Cohorts which were now left in the city : see above, n. on chap. 58.

² This pool or basin is supposed to have been situated somewhere between the Capitol and the Quirinal.

³ In earlier times the *Arx* and the *Capitolium* were carefully distinguished from one another, but here Tac. combines them in a single expression, *arcem Capitolii*. The capitol, as a whole, consists of two heights ; the higher of the two (by a few feet) lies to the NE., and was properly designated the *Arx* or citadel. On this height now stands the church of Santa Maria in Ara Coeli. The other height, to the SW., was the *Capitolium* proper. On that height, where now stands the German embassy and the Palazzo Caffarelli, stood formerly the great temple of

Jupiter Capitolinus, which represented to the Romans the visible centre of the state. 'The double nature of the Capitoline is shown by the prevalence of the double designation, *Arx et Capitolium* (Liv. v. 39, and Cic. Cat. iv. 18), down to the end of the republic, although the increasing importance of the Capitolium, and the decreasing necessity for the citadel, led to the gradual application of the word *Capitolium* to the entire hill. On the other hand, the word *Capitolium* was also employed to designate simply the temple of Jupiter itself, as the most significant part of the whole' (Platner's *Ancient Rome*, p. 292, 2nd ed.). Thus in the passage before us, Tac. uses *Arx Capitolii* of the capitol as a whole, while he also uses *Capitolium* in its narrower and proper sense.

easily be given, seeing that after Vespasian's victory many persons pretended to have served his cause in that way. Women also were included among the besieged, the most conspicuous of these being Verulana Gratilla,¹ who had come in, not along with children or relatives, but in quest of battle. The Vitellians set a guard round the besieged; but so slack was it that Sabinus brought his own children and his brother's son Domitian into the Capitol at dead of night, having got a messenger through at an unguarded point to inform the Flavian leaders that they were besieged, and would be hard put to it if help were not forthcoming. The night passed so quietly that Sabinus could have escaped unharmed; for though the Vitellian soldiers were brave in the face of danger, they were remiss in the labours of sentry duty, while a sudden downpour of rain prevented them from hearing or seeing anything.

70 In the early dawn, before mutual hostilities had begun, Sabinus dispatched Cornelius Martialis, one of the chief Centurions, to Vitellius with a message complaining that he had broken their compact:—

At day-break, he sends an envoy to remonstrate with Vitellius.

He had gone through a mere form and pretence of laying down Empire, to deceive all those illustrious men. Why had he challenged public observation by going from the rostra to his brother's house—a house overlooking the Forum—instead of to his wife's home on the Aventine, as would have befitted one in a private station, desirous of avoiding all appearance of being Emperor? Instead of that, he had returned to the Palace—the very citadel of Empire—whence he had sent out an armed force, strewing the most frequented quarter of the city with the

¹ This person was banished under Domitian (Plin. Epp. iii. 11), so she was probably a notorious person.

slaughtered bodies of innocent men, and assailing even the Capitol itself.

He himself, continued Sabinus, was but a civilian and a simple Senator; yet at a time when the issue between Vespasian and Vitellius was being decided by battles between Legions, by the capture of towns, and by the surrender of cohorts—at a moment when the Provinces of Spain, Germany, and Britain were in revolt—he himself, own brother to Vespasian, had remained true to Vitellius, until he had been invited to arrange terms of accommodation. Peace and Concord were excellent things for conquered men; they were but fine names for the conqueror. If Vitellius repented him of his compact, let him not draw the sword upon himself (Sabinus), whom he had so treacherously deceived, or against the youthful son of Vespasian. What would the slaughter of one old man and one youth profit him? Let him go forth to meet the Legions and there fight out the supreme issue; all else would follow the event of battle.

Vitellius shuffles and throws the blame on the soldiers.

To this Vitellius replied with a few faltering words of excuse, throwing the blame on the soldiers, whose excessive ardour, he said, he was powerless¹ to restrain; and he advised Martialis to leave the Palace unseen by a secret egress, lest he should be slain by the soldiers as the proposer of an unwelcome peace. For Vitellius himself could neither prohibit nor command; he was not so much an Emperor as an excuse for war.

The Capitol is furiously attacked and stormed.

Scarcely had Martialis got back to the Capitol 71 when the soldiers began a furious attack. There was no one to lead; every man acted for himself. Moving rapidly across the Forum, and past the Temples that

¹ The phrase is peculiar. What Vitellius says is that his *modestia*—i. e. his want of self-assertion and lack of the

qualities of command—made him incapable of restraining his soldiers.

overlook it, they advanced right up the slope to the outer gate¹ of the Capitoline citadel. On the right-hand side of the ascent there formerly stood a colonnade; mounting on to the roof of this colonnade, the defenders poured down stones and tiles upon the Vitellians. The Vitellians, having no weapons but their swords, and thinking it too long to wait till engines and missiles could be brought up, threw blazing torches upon the projecting portico, and following up the flames would have burst through the burning gates of the Capitol, had not Sabinus torn up all the statues² that were there—statues that had been the pride of former generations—and hurled them down so as to form a kind of wall across the entrance.

Thereupon the Vitellians attacked the Capitol from two opposite approaches: the one beside the grove of the Asylum, the other leading by the hundred steps to the Tarpeian Rock.³ Both attacks

The Capitoline Temple is burnt.

¹ Where this gate was is not certain; but the use of the phrase *Capitolinae arcis fores* shows that it was a gate which led both to the Arx and to the Capitolium, and therefore must have been below, and formed the entrance to, the depression between the two heights which was called the *Asylum*, or *inter duos lucos*. The approach to the Capitol as a whole was up the *Clivus Capitolinus*, to which the *Via Sacra* led. It swept right up the hill, past and round the temple of Saturn, whose eight surviving columns form so conspicuous a feature at the NW. corner of the Forum. The *Clivus* was a paved road of which some fragments still survive. On arriving at the Asylum, it turned off to the left, probably winding round the cliff so as to reach the level plateau at the top in front of the main entrance to the temple. The access to the Arx proper would be by a road or path turning from the Asylum to the right; but the details of the access on this side of the hill have not as yet been satisfactorily made out.

² The Capitol was covered with statues. Pliny gives a list of them, the most celebrated being those of Apollo, Hercules, and Jupiter (N.H. xxxiv. 7, 18). The downpour of statues saved the gate which barred the regular entrance to the Asylum along the Clivus, and so the assailants had to turn to other ways of approach.

³ The assailants, balked in their attempt to approach the Capitol in the ordinary way, now turned their attention to other possible approaches. One of these led to the Capitolium from the S. corner, near the Tarpeian rock, by a flight of a hundred steps (*centum gradibus*); the other ascended to the Asylum and the Arx from somewhere behind the temple of Concord. By this way the Vitellians were able to reach the Asylum from the back, without passing through the burning gate. The phrase *iuxta lucum asyli* means that they passed close to the Asylum, taking the enemy in the rear while he was engaged in defending the gate. But instead of advancing by the direct way up the Clivus, the assailants

were unexpected; the closer and fiercer of the two was that by the Asylum, where the assailants could not be prevented from clambering on to the adjoining buildings, which during times of profound peace had been raised to a height level with the floor of the Capitol. Whether it was the assailants who now set fire to these buildings, or whether, as more commonly reported, the defenders attempted in this way to drive back the resolute advance of the enemy, is a matter of dispute: but from these buildings the flames spread to the colonnade attached to the Temple; before long the old timber of the eagles that supported the pediment caught fire and fed the conflagration, and thus the Capitoline Temple, with its gates closed, was burnt to the ground, undefended and unrifled.

History
of the
Temple.

Of all the calamities that ever befell the people of 72 Rome since the foundation of the city, none was so shameful, so lamentable as this: that at a time when we had no foreign enemy, when the Gods were kindly to us, had our sins allowed, the seat of the most Excellent and most Mighty Jupiter,¹ founded by our forefathers under all due auspices as a pledge of Empire—a Temple which neither Porsenna, when the city surrendered² to him, nor the Gauls, when they captured it, had been able to violate—should have been destroyed by the frenzy of our Emperors. Once before, indeed, during the Civil War, had the Capitol

clambered over the roofs of the houses closely packed against the side of the hill. Thus on both sides, as Tac. says, the *vis* was *improvisa*.

¹ Though Tac. mentions only the name of Jupiter, the temple was in reality devoted to a triad of Gods—Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva—the latter two having each a niche on one side of Jupiter.

² The words *adedita urbe* are of great historical importance. They seem to establish the fact, carefully concealed in the narrative of Livy, that Rome actually fell before Porsenna, instead of being saved by the heroic act of Horatius Cocles, as so brilliantly told in Macaulay's *Lays*. Tac.'s view is confirmed by Pliny (*N. H.* xxxiv. 14, 39).

been burnt; ¹ but that was an outrage committed by private hands, whereas on this occasion it was openly besieged, openly burnt: and on what plea of war? What was the gain from so terrible a disaster? And was it for our country that we were fighting?

The Temple was vowed during the Sabine War by King Tarquinius Priscus, who laid its foundations on a scale corresponding rather to hopes of future greatness, than to the modest fortunes of the Roman people at that time. After him Servius Tullius, ² zealously aided by our allies, carried on the building; and finally Tarquinius Superbus completed it, out of spoils taken from the enemy at the capture of Suessa Pometia.

But the glory of the work was reserved for the days of liberty. It was dedicated, after the expulsion of the Kings, by Horatius Pulvillus, in his second Consulship, on a scale of magnificence which in aftertimes was adorned, rather than enlarged, by the immense wealth of the Roman people. Burnt after an interval of four hundred and fifteen years in the Consulship of Lucius Scipio and Gaius Norbanus, it was rebuilt upon the same site. The work was undertaken by Sulla after his victory; that he did not dedicate it, was the one thing wanting to his 'Happy Fortune,' ³ and down to the time of Vitellius, amid all

Vowed by
Tarquinius
Priscus,

it was dedi-
cated by
Horatius.

It had
been burnt
once be-
fore, and
rebuilt.

¹ On July 6, B.C. 83, during the struggle between the Marian and Sullan parties.

² What Tac. says of Tarquinius Priscus agrees entirely with Livy's account; but Tac. stands alone in giving Servius Tullius a share in the Capitoline Temple. According to Livy and Dionysius, the great work of Servius was the Temple of Diana on the Aventine for the common worship of the Latin communities.

³ In allusion to the name *Felix*, a title which Sulla bestowed on himself in

the year B.C. 81, after celebrating his triumph over Mithradates. In addition to the successes of his life, Sulla was also *felix opportunitate mortis*, in so far that his political arrangements, startling and reactionary as they were, remained undisturbed until after his death, as well as during the three years of his retirement. The saying in the text (*hoc solum felicitati eius negatum*) is attributed to Sulla himself by Pliny (N. H. vii. 43, 44). The dedication by Q. Lutatius Catulus, who was head of the party of Optimates, and son of the

the monuments of the Caesars,¹ it continued to bear the name of Lutatius Catulus. This was the Temple that was now burnt down.

Imbecile
conduct of
Sabinus.

The disaster caused more dismay to the besieged 73 than to the besiegers. The Vitellians showed no lack either of cunning or of courage in the emergency; but on the other side the soldiers were terror-stricken, and their torpid commander, as if bereft of his wits, with neither tongue to speak nor ears to hear, could neither follow the counsels of others nor devise any of his own. Driven now this way, and now that, by the clamour of the enemy, he would forbid what he had ordered, and order what he had forbidden; then, as happens when things grow desperate, everyone ordered, and nobody obeyed; till at last the men threw away their arms, and looked around for a chance of slinking away unperceived.

The Vitellians burst in; many Flavians are slain, many escape.

The Vitellians now burst in, creating a welter of blood, sword, and fire. A few soldierly men, conspicuous among whom were Cornelius Martialis,² Aemilius Pacensis, Casperius Niger, and Didius Scaeva, offered resistance and were cut down. Unarmed, and making no attempt to escape, Flavius Sabinus was surrounded, as also the Consul Quintus Atticus,³ whose vanity in clinging to the shadow of office, and issuing manifestoes in which Vespasian was glorified and Vitellius abused, had made him a marked man. The rest escaped by divers chances, some disguised as slaves, some concealed by faithful

conqueror of the Cimbri and Teutones, took place in the year B.C. 69. Hence he was given the name of *Capitolinus*. Catulus was consul in B.C. 78.

¹ Augustus states in the *Mon. Ancyr.* that he spent large sums upon the Capitol *sine ulla inscriptione nominis mei* (iv. 9).

² For Cornelius Martialis see above,

chap. 70. Aemilius Pacensis was one of the feeble commanders of Otho's luckless naval raid on the Narbonese province (i. 87 and ii. 12).

³ This man was *cos. suf.* for the last two months of the year along with Caecilius Simplex, for whom see ii. 60, and iii. 68.

clients or hidden away among the baggage; while others, discovering the watchword by which the Vitellians were known to each other, would answer or even offer challenges, thus drawing upon audacity for their concealment.

74 When the Vitellians broke in, Domitian was hiding in the Temple-keeper's house; a freedman cleverly thrust him, in a white garb,¹ among a choir of worshippers: thus escaping recognition, he took refuge near the Velabrum² with Cornelius Primus, one of his father's clients. When his father attained to power, he pulled down the Temple-keeper's chamber, and erected there a small chapel to Jupiter the Preserver, with an altar on which his own adventure was represented on a marble relief; on becoming Emperor himself, he dedicated an immense Temple to Jupiter the Preserver with a representation of himself seated in the lap of that Deity.

Escape of Domitian.

Sabinus and Atticus were laden with chains and brought before Vitellius, who received them without signs of displeasure, either in look or word. Others, however, protested that the men's lives were forfeit,³ and claimed a reward for their own services;

Sabinus taken before Vitellius and put to death;

¹ A white linen dress (the ancestor of our surplice) was worn by the worshippers of Isis, whose cult had become popular in Rome at this time. Suet., whose account differs somewhat from that of Tac., says that after spending the night in a door-keeper's house, Domitian escaped in the morning, *Isiaci celatus habitu interque sacrificulos vanæ superstitionis* (Dom. 1). It will be remembered that Piso similarly sought to escape by taking refuge in the house of a slave attached to the temple of Vesta (i. 43).

² The Velabrum was the low-lying ground, originally a swamp, between the Tiber, the N. point of the Palatine, and the S. point of the Capitoline.

³ The phrase *ius caedis* has been insufficiently explained. It is one of

those phrases which Tac. sometimes, and Horace often, inserts in imitation of some well-known technical term so as to get the benefit of an old association for a new idea. The phrases *ius connubii*, *ius commercii*, *ius gentium*, *ius honorum*, *ius Latii*, *ius suffragii*, were all well-known legal and constitutional phrases, each of which carried with it a definite meaning, understood by everyone. The phrase *ius caedis*, in which one might almost suspect a touch of humour, as put in the mouth of a cruel mob clamouring for slaughter, conveys the idea that these men had forfeited their lives and deserved to be put to death. We may compare the delightful Scotch expression which says of a guilty criminal that 'he is entitled to be hanged.' In old

at this a shout arose from the bystanders, and the vile rabble, mingling threats with flattery, called for the execution of Sabinus. Vitellius took his stand upon the Palace steps, preparing to intercede for him; but he was overborne, and the body of Sabinus, pierced through and through, mangled and decapitated, was cast upon the Gemonian stairs.

his life and
character.

So ended a man of no mean parts. Sabinus had 75 served his country for thirty-five years, distinguishing himself both at home and abroad. Of the innocence and uprightness of his life there could be no question. But he was too much of a talker:¹ that was the only fault with which rumour charged him during the seven years of his command in Moesia, and the twelve years during which he held the Prefecture of the city. Some thought he showed a want of spirit in his last moments; others gave him credit for moderation, and an anxiety to save the blood of citizens; but all must admit that before Vespasian became Emperor he was the most distinguished member of the family. We are told that Mucianus rejoiced at his death; and many thought it well for the public peace that an end had been put to the rivalry between two men, one of whom might regard himself as the Emperor's brother, the other as his partner in authority.

The consul
Atticus
spared.

The people called for the death of the Consul Atticus; but Vitellius, repaying as it were one favour with another, resisted the demand. For when it was

Scotch 'to be justified' meant 'to be executed.'

¹ The phrase *sermonis nimius* has not been quite explained. Some suppose that it refers to boasting; but there is no suggestion of this elsewhere in Tac. It probably means that Sabinus was a man of words, rather than of deeds; more

ready to talk, than to do. Tac. perhaps thought with the Psalmist, 'A man full of words shall not prosper upon the earth' (Psalm cxl. 11); but the words which follow (*calumniatus est rumor*) seem to imply something more than mere garrulity.

asked who had set the Capitol on fire, Atticus took the blame upon himself: by which confession—whether true or opportunely false—he was held to have taken the odious charge upon himself, and to have removed it from the party of Vitellius.

76 During these same days Lucius Vitellius, now encamped at the temple of Feronia,¹ was threatening Terracina, where the gladiators and rowers were shut up, not daring to leave the walls and risk a battle in the open country. Julianus, as I have mentioned above,² was in command of the gladiators, Apollinaris of the seamen; but in profligacy and laxity they were more like gladiators than Generals. They kept no watch, they omitted to strengthen weak places in the walls; day and night those pleasant shores re-echoed to the sounds of their revelry; the soldiers were sent on errands to minister to their pleasures; they never talked of war save over their cups. Apinius Tiro³ had quitted the place a few days before, and by his harsh exactions of gifts and contributions among the municipal towns was adding less to the strength of his party than to its ill odour.

77 Meanwhile a slave of Vergilius Capito⁴ went over to Lucius Vitellius and offered, if he were given a force, to put the citadel unoccupied into his

War prosecuted in Latium and Campania by L. Vitellius.

Terracina captured by treachery.

¹ Feronia was an old Italian Goddess of Freedom, worshipped by freedmen and freedwomen (Liv. xxii. 1). Horace tells us this place was three miles from Terracina (the ancient Anxur), and that he and his companions on their journey to Brundisium washed their hands and faces in the fountain of Feronia (Sat. i. 5, 24). Heraeus is very likely right in his suggestion that we should read *Feroniae* (*aedem* being understood) after the analogy of *locus Castorum vocatur* ii. 24, *ad Martis* etc. Cp. our own St. Andrews, St.

Leonards, etc.

² In chap. 57.

³ The ex-prætor mentioned in chap. 57, who was heading the revolt from Vitellius.

⁴ No doubt an inhabitant of Terracina. In iv. 3 we learn that this slave was crucified, thereby affording some *solacium* for his treachery. To whom the *solacium* was afforded is not specified; what is meant apparently is the satisfaction afforded to the minds of right-thinking people.

possession. He accordingly, in the dead of night, posted some lightly equipped cohorts upon a hill-top directly above the enemy, from which the soldiers charged down for what was rather a massacre than a battle. They fell upon the garrison unarmed, or in the act of taking up their arms, some of them just roused from sleep; the darkness, the blare of trumpets, and the shouts of the assailants, adding to the panic and the confusion. A few of the gladiators resisted and perished, not unavenged; the rest fled to the ships. Here again all was terror and disorder; townsfolk and soldiers together were slaughtered indiscriminately by the Vitellians.

The fleet
also cap-
tured;

Julianus
put to
death.

Conduct of
Triaria : L.
Vitellius
stopped
from
marching
on Rome.

At the beginning of the commotion the Prefect Apollinaris, with six Liburnian galleys, had escaped; the rest of the vessels were captured on the shore, or sank under the weight of those who rushed on board of them. Julianus was taken before Lucius Vitellius, who had him first cruelly scourged, and then slain in his presence. Some accused Triaria,¹ the wife of Lucius Vitellius, of having girded herself with a sword and displayed wanton ferocity amid the horrors of the assault and massacre. Lucius himself sent a laurelled dispatch to his brother to announce his victory, inquiring whether he desired him to return at once to Rome, or to pursue the subjugation of Campania. This pause proved the salvation not only of the Flavian cause, but of Rome also. For if those soldiers, so truculent by nature, had marched to Rome in the flush of victory, a desperate conflict would have ensued, involving perhaps the destruction of the city; for Lucius Vitellius, however infamous his life, was a man of

¹ For Triaria's character, see ii. 63 and 64.

energy, his strength lying, not in his virtues, as with good men, but as with the worst of mankind, in his vices.

78 While these things were happening on the side of Vitellius, the army of Vespasian had left Narnia and was peacefully spending the days of the Saturnalia¹ at Ocriculum.² The reason for this fatal delay was that they were waiting for Mucianus. Some insinuated that Antonius had delayed with a treacherous intent, having received a private communication from Vitellius offering him the Consulship, and the hand of his daughter in marriage, along with a dowry, as the price of treason. Others said that this was a false tale, invented to please Mucianus; while some again believed that all the Generals had agreed on the policy of threatening the city rather than actually attacking it, since it seemed likely that Vitellius, left defenceless by the defection of his best cohorts, would abdicate the sovereignty: but that everything was spoilt, first by the precipitancy, and then by the poltroonery, of Sabinus, who after rashly taking up arms had been unable to defend against three cohorts the citadel of the Capitol—an impregnable position which could have defied mighty armies.

But it is not easy to lay upon any one man's shoulders the blame which was shared by all.³ For while Mucianus kept back the victors by ambiguous instructions, Antonius condemned himself by his ill-timed acquiescence at the moment when he was

Meanwhile the advancing Flavian army was halting at Ocriculum.

The generals were culpable for this delay.

¹ The Saturnalia, the great holiday season of the Romans, when every kind of license and festivity prevailed, lasted for five days from December 17.

² Ocriculum was the spot at which the Flaminian Way crossed the Tiber from Umbria into Etruria, a few miles below the junction of the Tiber with

the Nar.

³ This fatal delay cost Rome the burning of the Capitol, and all the hideous slaughter which took place at the capture of the city by the Flavians. A matter of twenty-four hours would have been enough to prevent all those horrors.

throwing the odium upon others; while the other Generals, by presuming that the war was over, increased the horrors of its close. Even Petilius Cerialis, who had been sent on with a thousand horse by cross roads into the Sabine country to enter Rome by the Salarian Way, took no pains to hurry himself until the news of the siege of the Capitol set everyone at once in motion.¹

Antonius moves by the Flaminian Way.

Marching by the Flaminian Way, Antonius 79 arrived at Saxa Rubra² too late at night to be of any assistance. Here he heard nothing but bad news: *Sabinus had been killed and the Capitol burnt; the city was in a panic; the populace and the slaves were arming for Vitellius.*

Petilius Cerialis worsted in a cavalry engagement.

And besides this, Petilius Cerialis had been worsted in a cavalry engagement: advancing incautiously, as if to meet a conquered foe, he was encountered by the Vitellians with a mixed body of horse and foot, at a spot not far from the city, among houses, gardens, and winding lanes³—all familiar to the Vitellians but unknown and disconcerting to their enemy. Nor were the Flavian cavalry all of one mind, since included among them were some men who had recently surrendered at Narnia, and were watching the fortunes of the two parties. Julius Flavianus, commander of a wing, was taken prisoner; the rest were shamefully put to flight, but pursued no further than Fidenae.

¹ The object of sending Petilius Cerialis round by the Salarian Way was probably twofold. One object was to make two simultaneous attacks on the city from different points; but besides that, the Colline Gate, being at the highest point of the circumference of the walls, occupied the most commanding position, once gained, for a descent into the city.

² Saxa Rubra (now *Prima Porta*)

was the first resting-place on the Flaminian Way, about six miles out of Rome. It was in a villa of Livia's close to Saxa Rubra that the famous statue of Augustus now in the Vatican was found.

³ The confusion of gardens, walls, houses, and narrow winding lanes corresponds exactly to what is to be found in the suburbs of Rome in that part of the city at the present day.

80 This success fired the populace. The city mob took to arms. Some few of them had proper shields; the majority caught up any weapon that came handy, and demanded to be led to battle. Vitellius thanked them, and bade them go forth to defend the city. He then summoned the Senate, who appointed envoys to proceed to the armies, and exhort them to peace and concord in name of the public good. The envoys received various treatment. Those who went out to meet Petilius Cerialis were in danger of their lives, as the soldiers would not hear of terms of peace. The Praetor Arulenus Rusticus¹ was wounded—an outrage which, in addition to the insult to the offices of Legate and of Praetor, seemed all the more flagrant from the high personal character of the man.² His companions were beaten; the lictor next to his person, who ventured to push back the crowd, was killed; and had not the General given a guard for their protection, the sacred function of ambassador, respected even among foreign nations, would have been violated by civic fury, even to the shedding of blood, before the very walls of his own city. The envoys who went to Antonius were more favourably received, not because the soldiers were less outrageous, but because the General had more control.

Envoys appointed by the Senate to proceed to the armies.

Outrage on the Praetor Arulenus.

81 A Knight of the name of Musonius Rufus³ had

Ill-timed lecture by

¹ Arulenus Rusticus was a distinguished man, a Stoic as well as a statesman. On the occasion of the famous trial of Thræsea, Arulenus, being then a young man, had offered, as Tribune of the Plebs, to put his veto upon the action of the Senate; but Thræsea thought the risk too great and refused his permission (Ann. xvi. 26). His outspoken eulogy of Thræsea and Helvidius cost him afterwards his life at the hands of Domitian about A.D. 94, *quod Paeti*

Thræseae et Helvidii Prisci laudes edidisset, appellassetque eos sanctissimos viros (Suet. Dom. 10).

² The *dignatio*, in Tac.'s eyes, no doubt consisted mainly in his being a philosopher and a Stoic.

³ C. Musonius Rufus was a philosopher of repute, the teacher of Epicuretus. He is twice referred to in Book iv. (chaps. 10 and 40) as accusing the pseudo-philosopher Egnatius Celer of having given false evidence against

the Stoic
Musonius.

intruded himself among the envoys. This man, being a philosopher, and a zealous follower of the Stoics, thrust himself in among the maniples, and began to lecture the armed soldiers upon the blessings of peace and the uncertainties of war. Many laughed at him; the majority lost patience with him; and he would have been hustled and trampled upon had he not been induced by warnings from the better sort, and by the threats of others, to desist from his ill-timed philosophising.

The Vestal
Virgins are
sent out.

The Vestal Virgins also came out with a letter from Vitellius to Antonius, asking that the supreme issue might be deferred for one day:—*The delay*, he said, *would smooth the way for an arrangement*. The Vestals were respectfully dismissed; the answer returned to Vitellius was that, *The slaughter of Sabinus and the destruction of the Capitol had made negotiations*¹ *impossible*.

Antonius
endeavours
to allay the
fury of his
army.

Nevertheless Antonius, calling his Legions 82 together, endeavoured to allay their fury; he proposed that they should encamp near the Mulvian Bridge, and not enter the city till the following day. His reason for delay was the fear that if the soldiers were exasperated by resistance, they would spare neither people nor Senate—not even the Temples and shrines of the Gods. But the soldiers would not hear of any postponement, as though that would rob them of their victory; while at the same time the

Barea Soranus. In the present passage it is refreshing to recognise the humour with which Tac. recounts the incident. The words *miscuerat se* indicate that Musonius Rufus was an officious busy-body, anxious to thrust in himself and his opinions in the most untoward circumstances. Though a philosopher himself, Tac. was man of the world enough to smile at the tactlessness and brusquerie too often displayed by his

co-philosophers. In his own public life he was censured by the more uncompromising of the school as being too ready to accept existing circumstances and bow to the inevitable—too ready to render unto Caesar the things that were Caesar's.

¹ *Belli commercia* would include all such dealings as it is possible for enemies to have with one another in time of war.

standards glittering on the hills, though there was only an unwarlike populace behind them, presented the appearance of a hostile army.

The Flavian force was divided into three columns. One column marched straight on along the Flaminian Way; a second proceeded along the banks of the Tiber; a third, taking the Salarian Road, approached the Colline Gate; the mob were dispersed by a charge of cavalry.¹ The Vitellian soldiers likewise posted themselves at three points for the defence.

The Flavians advance in three columns.

Much fighting took place outside the walls, with various results; the advantage generally being with the Flavians, in consequence of the better tactics of their Generals. The only body which suffered severely was that which entered the left quarter of the city, and had to force its way through narrow and slippery streets to the Gardens of Sallust.² The Vitellians took their stand upon the garden walls, and kept their assailants off with discharges of stones and javelins until late in the day, when they were taken in rear by the cavalry, who had broken in by the Colline Gate.

Severe fighting near the Gardens of Sallust;

The hostile forces met also in the Campus Martius. The Flavians had Fortune on their side, and the many victories they had won; the Vitellians rushed on in sheer desperation, and though they were driven back, they gathered again within the city.

desperate fighting in the Campus Martius; the Flavians everywhere victorious. Brutal callousness

83 The populace looked on at the fighting as at a spectacle, cheering and encouraging, now one side,

¹ This scattering of the mob would seem to have taken place outside the walls.

² These splendid gardens, laid out originally by the historian Sallust, occupied the valley between the SE. slope of the Pincian (*Collis Hortulorum*) on the one hand, and the NW. slopes of

the Quirinal on the other. They lay outside the circuit of the Servian Walls, and just to the W. of the Colline and Salarian Gates. When Tac. says here *in partem sinistram urbis* he means it was to the left of the main army advancing along the Flaminian road.

of the
populace ;

hideous
aspect of
the city.

now the other. Whenever either side gave way, they would tell of some who were hiding in taverns, or had taken refuge in private houses, and suggest that they should be dragged out and butchered, securing thereby most of the plunder for themselves; for while the soldiers were intent on blood and slaughter, the spoils fell to the mob. The city everywhere presented a hideous and monstrous aspect: bloody fights at one place, baths and cookshops at another; pools of blood and piles of dead bodies, with prostitutes and their like standing by; all the lusts of luxurious ease, with all the crimes and cruelties usual at the capture of cities, till one felt that the whole community had gone mad, at one and the same time, both with rage and lust. Battles, indeed, between armed hosts had been fought in the city before, and with no less cruelty¹—twice when Lucius Sulla,² once when Cinna,³ was the victor. But on this occasion there was an inhuman indifference; not for one moment were pleasures intermitted. Men triumphed and enjoyed themselves as if a new zest had been added to that holiday season, caring nothing for either cause, and exulting in the calamities of their country.

Storming
of the
camp.

The most arduous conflict of all occurred at the 84
storming of the camp, which was held as their last hope by the bravest of the Vitellians. Hence the victors, and more especially the former Praetorians, fought here more desperately than ever, employing all the devices invented for the destruction of the strongest

¹ In allusion to the terrible proscriptions which defaced both the Marian and the Sullan victories.

² Sulla had twice arrived as a conqueror in Rome: once in B.C. 88, after reducing the Samnites, when he expelled and proscribed the hitherto victorious Marians; a second time in B.C. 82, after

the Mithradatic war, when he entered Rome after the terrible battle of the Colline Gate.

³ Cinna's capture of Rome was effected in B.C. 87, when after being chased out of the city as consul he made common cause with Marius, and secured for him his last and short-lived victory.

cities—tortoises, catapults, mounds, and firebrands—and proclaiming that, *Here would be the crowning triumph for the hardships and perils they had gone through in all their battles. They had given back to the Senate and the People of Rome their city, to the Gods their Temples; but the special pride of the soldier was his camp. That was his country, that his home; if they could not recover the camp forthwith, they must spend the night under arms.*

The Vitellians, on the other side, although inferior in numbers and with fate against them, made victory dear, holding out to the last, and revelled in befouling altars and hearths with blood as affording the last solace to the vanquished. Many lay half dead upon the towers or battlements of the walls and there breathed their last; the remainder, bursting open the gates, threw themselves in one body upon the victors, and perished to a man, their wounds in front, their faces to the foe, determined, even in their last moments, to die with honour.¹

Heroic resistance of the Vitellians.

After the capture of the city, Vitellius was carried in a chair through the back part of the Palace to his wife's house on the Aventine, intending, if he could conceal himself during the day, to take refuge with the cohorts of his brother at Terracina. Then with his usual inconstancy of purpose, and with the natural tendency of a man who fears everything to be most disquieted by what he sees before him, he returned to the desolate and deserted Palace, where even the lowest of the menials had either slunk away or shrank from meeting him. He was terrified by the solitude and the silence; he tried closed

Irresolution of Vitellius.

¹ Tac. never fails to do justice to the bravery of brave men, whatever the cause for which they may be fighting.

He is dragged out of his hiding-place,

doors, and shuddered at the emptiness. Wearied at last with his wretched wandering, he concealed himself in a mean hiding-place,¹ whence he was dragged forth by the Tribune of a cohort, Julius Placidus. Then with his hands bound behind his back, and his clothes torn, he was led along, a hideous spectacle, amid the curses of many and the tears of none, all pity quenched by the unseemly manner of his end. One of the German soldiers in his path, either in anger, or to save him from further outrage, aimed a blow at him—or possibly at the Tribune: the man cut off the Tribune's ear and was immediately dispatched.

and ignominiously put to death.

Vitellius was compelled by sword-points to hold up his head and offer it to insult; then to look at his statues as they fell,² and to gaze again and again at the Rostra, and the spot where Galba had been murdered. He was finally thrust out on to the Gemonian stairs,³ where the body of Flavius Sabinus had lain. 85

One saying alone of a not ignoble kind was he heard to utter in answer to the insults of the Tribune:—*Yet I was once your Emperor!* He then fell under a multitude of blows; the mob reviled him when slain with the same baseness with which they had fawned on him when alive.

His parentage

His native place was Luceria; he had nearly 86

¹ According to Suet. 'the shameful hiding-place' (*pudenda latebra*) was nothing worse than a porter's lodge, where Vitellius attempted to defend himself by a dog chained before the door and by a barricade formed of bed and bedding (Vit. 16).

² The first impulse of a Roman mob on the downfall of a great man was to overturn his statues. Juvenal describes in his own manner how on the fall of Sejanus his statues were committed to the flames and peeled off into 'flakes,

pots, and pipkins': *crepat ingens = Sejanus, deinde ex facie toto orbe secunda = Fium turceoli pelves sartago matellae* (Sat. x. 62-4). On this occasion the mob seem to have lost no time to make sure that Vitellius should have the chance of seeing the sight with his own eyes.

³ The Gemonian stairs, on which the bodies of executed criminals were thrown, were close to the *Tullianum* (or so-called Mamertine prison) on the way up to the Arx, or N. height of the Capitol.

completed his fifty-seventh year.¹ His Consulship, his priesthoods, his fame and position among the leaders of the day, had all been won, not by any merit of his own, but by the great name of his father. The Principate was conferred on him by men who did not know him; and rarely did any man by good qualities so completely gain the devotion of an army as Vitellius did by slothfulness. Yet he was frank and generous—qualities which, uncontrolled, may lead to ruin. Deeming friendships to depend upon lavish gifts, rather than on stability of character, he earned them rather than enjoyed them.² His overthrow was, without doubt, for his country's good; but the men who betrayed him to Vespasian can take no credit for their perfidy, seeing that they had been false to Galba.³

and character.

The day was now hastening to its close; and as the Magistrates and Senators in their terror had either fled from the city, or were hiding in the houses of their clients, no meeting of the Senate could be called. When all fear of hostilities was at an end, Domitian came forth and presented himself to the party leaders; the whole army saluted him as 'Caesar,' and escorted him under arms, just as they were, to his paternal home.

Domitian comes forth and is hailed as 'Caesar.'

¹ Dying thus upon December 20, A.D. 69, Vitellius had been Emperor for a year all but a few days.

² Here again Tac. puts the right conduct of friendship, and the right treatment of friends, among the most important points of human character. See iv. 10 and n. *Constantia*—un-

flinching devotion to their principles—was the highest Stoical virtue.

³ It is a fine point in Tac. as a moralist and a historian that he shows as little mercy to those who deserted a bad cause for a good one as to those who betrayed the best for the worst.

BOOK IV.

Dreadful
state of
things in
the city.

THE death of Vitellius brought an end of war, rather than a beginning of peace. Implacable in their hatred, the victors hunted up their conquered foes throughout the city, sword in hand. The streets were full of slaughtered bodies, the Forums and the Temples of blood; men were slain everywhere, wherever they were encountered. Before long, with increasing lawlessness, men searched for their victims, and dragged them out of hiding: if they set eyes upon any tall and stalwart youth, they would cut him down, not distinguishing between soldier and civilian. The savagery which in the first moments of passion only blood could satisfy, was then turned into greed; nothing was secret to them, no place was closed, on the pretence that Vitellians might be in hiding there. With this excuse, they began breaking into private houses; to resist was death. Wealthy householders were betrayed by needy plebeians, or by the lowest of their slaves; others were pointed out by their friends; everywhere shrieks, lamentations, and all the incidents of a captured city, so that men looked back with regret upon the insolence of the Othonian and Vitellian soldiery which had formerly been so hateful to them. The party leaders, so active in kindling the Civil War, were powerless to keep their victory within bounds; for as in times of strife and turmoil the wickedest of men

prevail, so there can be no peace and quiet without virtue.

- 2 Domitian had received the title and the residence of a Caesar;¹ but he paid no attention as yet to business, and it was only in adulteries and foul living that he played the part of an Imperial prince. The command of the Praetorian troops was given to Arrius Varus; but the real power was in the hands of Primus Antonius, who carried off money and slaves from the Imperial household as if it had been plunder from Cremona. Other Generals, whose modesty or humble birth had kept them in obscurity during the war, reaped none of its rewards.

Antonius omnipotent in Rome.

The terrified citizens, ripe for slavery, demanded that the last embers of the war might be extinguished by intercepting Lucius Vitellius as he returned with his cohorts from Terracina. Some cavalry were accordingly sent on to Aricia; the main body of the Legions got no further than Bovillae. Vitellius at once surrendered himself and his cohorts to the conqueror's good pleasure; the soldiers, as much in wrath as in fear, threw away the arms that had served them so badly. And when the long array of prisoners, hedged in by armed guards, made its way through the city, not one of them bore a suppliant look upon his face; sullenly and grimly they marched on, unmoved by the clamour and ribald insults of the mob. A few ventured to break away and were overpowered by the bystanders; the rest were consigned to prison. Not one of them uttered an unworthy word; even in that dark hour

Surrender and death of Lucius Vitellius.

Sullen demeanour of his captured army.

¹ The name 'Caesar' became a title borne by all Emperors in succession from Galba onwards (except by Vitellius), though all traces of the Julian stock had disappeared with Nero. After Vespasian, it became the custom also to confer the title on the individual

destined as successor to the reigning Emperor. The *sedes Caesaris* here spoken of would be on the Palatine; the soldiers had in the first instance escorted him to his father's house (iii. 86).

they preserved their name for courage. Lucius Vitellius was then put to death. His brother's equal in vice, he excelled him in vigilance during his Principate; not so much a sharer in his prosperity, as dragged to ruin by his fall.

Campania
pacified.

About the same time Lucilius Bassus¹ was sent with some light horse to tranquillise Campania, where the trouble was due more to inter-municipal quarrels than to any hostility to Vespasian. The sight of the soldiers restored order; the smaller Colonies were left unpunished, but the distinguished families of Capua were sorely burdened by having the 3rd Legion billeted on them for the winter. On the other hand no relief was granted to Terracina. So much easier is it to repay an injury than a benefit; for whereas gratitude entails a burden, there is profit to be extracted from revenge.

Some consolation² was afforded by the execution of the slave of Vergilius Capito, whom I have mentioned as having betrayed Terracina. He was now crucified, wearing the selfsame rings which had been conferred on him by Vitellius.

All im-
perial
powers
conferred
upon
Vespasian.

At Rome, the Senate conferred all the usual imperial powers³ upon Vespasian with joy and confidence, seeing that the civil strife which had broken out in Gaul and Spain, which had stirred Germany and then Illyricum to arms, and had now passed, like a

¹ This was the admiral who betrayed the fleet to Vespasian (iii. 12).

² A very Tacitean expression. To whom the solace was afforded is not specified; the implication is that it was to all right-minded citizens—especially himself.

³ A fragment of the decree of the senate here mentioned has been preserved on a bronze tablet now in the Capitoline Museum in Rome. It is one

of the most important original documents of Roman history in its bearing upon the constitutional powers of the Principate. Mr. Rushforth, in his interesting account of it in his *Latin Historical Inscriptions*, says: 'This fragment is the only example which has come down to us of the single legislative act by which the Princeps was constitutionally invested with the various powers which made up the Principate' (p. 83).

lustration, through Egypt, Judaea, and Syria—through all the Provinces and all the armies of the Empire—now seemed, after purifying as it were the entire world, to have reached its end.¹ Much pleasure was caused also by a letter from Vespasian, which seemed to have been written before the war was ended. That was the first impression that it made; but he wrote as an Emperor—modestly about himself, in a lofty tone in regard to public affairs.

Nor did the Senate fail in obsequiousness. It voted the Consulship to Vespasian, and to his son Titus; the Praetorship, with consular powers, to Domitian.

4 Mucianus also had sent a letter to the Senate which afforded matter for talk:²—*If he were a private individual, men asked, why make a public utterance? He might have said the same things a few days later in his place in the Senate. Even his attack on Vitellius came too late, and gave no proof of independence; it was presumptuous in regard to the state, and insulting to the Emperor, to boast that the Empire had been in his gift, and that he had bestowed it upon Vespasian.*

Letter to the Senate from Mucianus; it is much criticised.

These criticisms were made secretly; but the flatteries were expressed in public. The Triumphal insignia were voted to him for the Civil War in highly complimentary language—but under pretence of the expedition against the Sarmatians. The Senate also

Honours voted.

¹ The fine figure here employed by Tac. is taken from the ancient Italian rite of *lustratio*, 'which was used whenever city, army, crops or flocks had to be purified or protected from evil influences' (*Companion to Latin Studies*, p. 158). In the simplest case, that of a farm, a procession with victims marched round the entire farm. After the circuit was made, the victims were sacrificed, and everything included within the circuit was thereby held to be purified. It

needed a poet's mind to conceive the grand idea of a *lustratio* which should perform the circuit of the entire Roman world, and by a vast expenditure of human blood accomplish its purification.

² We have seen before in the case of Valens that it was thought presumptuous in any one but an Emperor to address the Senate by letter: *gratior Caecinae modestia fuit quod non scripsisset* (ii. 55).

conferred the Consular insignia upon Primus Antonius, the Praetorian on Cornelius Fuscus and Arrius Varus: that done, they bethought them of the Gods,¹ and resolved that the Capitol should be rebuilt. All these votes were passed on the motion of Valerius Asiaticus, Consul Designate; the others signified their assent by look or by hand; some few men of distinction, or persons who had cultivated a talent for flattery, delivered themselves of set orations. When the turn of Helvidius Priscus, Praetor Designate, came round, he made a speech which was greatly appreciated by the Senate; it was complimentary to the new Emperor,² but there was nothing in it which was not true. That was a notable day for Helvidius, marking the beginning of a great resentment and of a great renown.

Helvidius Priscus speaks;

his noble character.

As I have now for a second time³ named a man 5 whom I shall frequently have to mention, I feel called upon to give a short account of his life, his pursuits and fortunes. A native of the municipal town of Cluviae [in the Carecine⁴ district of Italy], son of a Chief Centurion, Helvidius Priscus had from early youth devoted his great talents to lofty studies,⁵ not using a grand name, like so many

¹ The satire in these words is fine; after heaping honours on Mucianus and the other Flavian generals, the senators *mox deos respexere*.

² Reading *novum* with Halm instead of *bonum* with M; and inserting *ita* before *falsa* to complete the sense. The construction is somewhat irregular, but not too much so for Tac. I see no reason for supposing any omission.

³ The allusion is to ii. 91, where we find Helvidius Priscus in the Senate venturing to differ in opinion from Vitellius, whose wrath was with difficulty appeased. The tribute which follows is one of the noblest passages in Tacitus, every word of it coming from his heart and conscience. Helvidius, like Tac. himself, was a Stoic and also a

man of affairs; but whether he is the same as the legate of a legion in Syria (Ann. xii. 49), and the tribune of the plebs (Ann. xiii. 28) is uncertain. Exiled by Nero when his father-in-law Thrasea had to put an end to himself, Helvidius had been recalled by Galba and was at this time (towards the close of A.D. 69) praetor designate.

⁴ The reading of M. here is manifestly corrupt. The text follows F.'s reading. A Samnite tribe *Caraceni* or *Caretini* is mentioned by Ptolemy and Pliny, and a town Cluviae in Samnium seems to be mentioned in an inscription (C.I.L. ix. 2999).

⁵ By *altiora studia* is meant of course the study of philosophy.

others, as a screen for ease and indolence, but with a view to fortifying himself against the chances of public life.¹ He followed the teaching of those philosophers who hold that virtue is the only good, that nothing is evil but what is base, and who account power, high birth, and all other things outside the mind, as neither good nor evil.² While still of Quaestorian rank, he had been chosen by Paetus Thrasea³ to be his son-in-law; ⁴ from him he drank in,⁵ above all other things, the spirit of liberty; and in every relation of life—as citizen, Senator, husband, son-in-law, and friend—he maintained an equally high level of conduct: contemptuous of wealth, unswerving in rectitude, undaunted in the face of danger.

6 There were some who thought him too greedy of fame—that last infirmity of even philosophic minds.⁶

He attacks Thrasea's accuser,

¹ See n. on iii. 81. Tac. himself was a statesman and administrator, as well as a Stoic philosopher. Instead of keeping himself aloof from public affairs, even under a Government which he disapproved and condemned, he thought it was the part of a wise man and a patriot to take part in the Government, and attempt to mitigate its rigours, rather than confine himself to cavilling and criticism from without. He had little sympathy with the extremists who were blind to all considerations of compromise and expediency, carrying independence to the length of defiance, and none at all with those false philosophers who affected the Stoic roughness of demeanour for purposes of ostentation or worse. See the tremendous castigation inflicted on such false philosophers in Ann. xvi. 32, quoted in n. below on chap. 7.

² A very compendious and carefully thought-out statement of the main ethical tenets of Stoicism. With this may be compared the admirable statement from the Stoical point of view of the problem of 'Free Will and Necessity' as given in Ann. vi. 22, where see n.

³ Paetus Thrasea, the Stoic philosopher, may be called the great hero of Tac. The account of his accusation, trial, and death in A.D. 66, as given in

the concluding chapters of the *Annals* (xvi. 21-35), is one of his most elaborate pieces of word-painting, beginning with the celebrated phrase, *Trucidatis tot insignibus viris ad postremum Nero virtutem ipsam excindere cupiuit interfecto Thrasea Paeto et Barea Sorano*. It is evident throughout that description that Tac. was intending to compare the death of Thrasea to that of Socrates.

⁴ The name of Thrasea's daughter who was married to Helvidius was Fannia.

⁵ In illustration of the phrase *libertatem hausit* the comm. well compare Agric. chap. 4, where we are told that Agricola used to say *se prima in iuventa studium philosophiae acrius, ultra quam concessum Romano ac senatori, hausisse*.

⁶ This famous saying has been made still more famous by its appropriation by Milton, when he describes ambition as 'That last infirmity of noble mind' (not 'minds,' as many give it). In the *Agricola*, chap. 9, the same idea occurs: *ne famam quidem, cui saepe etiam boni indulgent, . . . quaesivit*. The passage quoted by comm. from Athenaeus, who attributes a similar saying to Plato, omits the essential idea contained in Tac.'s *etiam sapientibus* (i.e. 'philosophers'); but the same idea appears as *etiam boni* in the *Agricola* passage.

Eprius
Marcellus.

Driven into exile at the time of his father-in-law's fall, he was restored under Galba, and at once impeached Thræsea's accuser, Eprius Marcellus.¹ This act of retaliation, as just as it was bold, divided the Senate into two parties, since the fall of Marcellus would involve that of a host of others. The contest was heated at first, and marked by excellent speeches on either side; but after a time, Galba's wishes being uncertain, and many Senators unfavourable, Priscus dropped the accusation. Men's comments were as various as their natures: some praised him for his forbearance, others deplored his weakness.²

Dispute as
to an em-
bassy to
Vespasian.

On the day when the Senate voted³ the Imperial powers to Vespasian, it was resolved to send an embassy to him; and a hot dispute arose upon the subject between Helvidius and Eprius—the former urging that special persons should be selected by the magistratès on oath, the latter that the choice should be by lot, as proposed by the Consul Designate.⁴

The motive of Marcellus was one of personal vanity; if others than himself were selected, they would appear to have been preferred before him. From mutual retorts they passed on by degrees to continuous invectives. Helvidius asked:—

The quotation from Fronto (p. 144, Naber) given by Heraeus covers the whole point; but Fronto's career began in Hadrian's time, and his passage has obviously been copied, with amplification, from Tac. :—*novissimum homini sapientiam colenti amiculum est gloriæ cupido; id novissime exiit.*

¹ For Marcellus Eprius see n. on ii. 10. Tac. never omits an opportunity of castigating this notorious delator.

² No concession to opportunism ever met the slightest mercy at the hands of the extreme Stoics.

³ The decree of the Senate prepared the way for the *lex de imperio* by which the various powers of the Emperors

were constitutionally conferred upon them. See above, n. on chap. 3. The lex itself would be passed by a *rogatio* brought before the comitia (probably the *Centuriata*), on the motion of a consul—the terms of the lex being founded on the decree of the Senate, and embodying its clauses. See Rushforth, *Latin Historical Inscriptions*, p. 84.

⁴ The opinion of the consul designate (Valerius Asiaticus) on a matter of procedure would carry great weight; so that we must regard Helvidius Priscus as the attacking party, seeking a ground for a quarrel, and his proposal as one contrary to ordinary precedent.

Why was Marcellus so afraid of the judgment of the magistrates? He had eloquence enough, and wealth enough, to put him above many, did not the recollection of his villainies keep him down. The balloting-urn was no discriminator of character; the plan of voting, and of taking the opinion of the Senate, had been suggested in order to obtain a judgment on each man's life and reputation. It concerned the public good—it was due to Vespasian himself—that he should be waited on by persons whom the Senate deemed to be beyond reproach, and who would address to the Emperor's ears none but noble sentiments. Thræsea, Soranus,¹ Sentius,² had all been on terms of friendship with Vespasian; their accusers, even if it were not right to punish them, ought not to be paraded before him. The choice of the Senate would be a kind of recommendation to him as to whom to approve, and whom to avoid; and good friends were among the most potent instruments of good government. Let Marcellus be satisfied with having incited Nero to the destruction of so many innocent men; let him enjoy his rewards³ and his impunity, and leave Vespasian to men better than himself.

Speech of
Helvidius.

8 To this Marcellus replied that:—

The proposal objected to was not his own, but had been

Rejoinder
of Mar-
cellus.

¹ This was Barea Soranus, the celebrated philosopher and statesman (cos. suf. A.D. 52 and afterwards proconsul of Asia), whose condemnation under Nero for treason, along with his young daughter, is told so pathetically in Ann. xvi. 30-32. What aggravated the case was that the accuser was himself a Stoic philosopher, P. Egnatius Celer: hence the well-known line of Juv. *Stoicus occidit Baram, delator amicum = Discipulumque senex* (iii. 116). This man belonged to a still baser class of philosophers than those who *nomine magnifico segne otium velarent* (chap. 5); he used an exterior of virtue to cloak a life of vice. This is how Egnatius is immortalised by Tacitus:—'He made a display of Stoic principles, and had schooled himself in countenance

and demeanour to present a semblance of virtue; but his heart was full of treachery and cunning, of avarice and sensuality. These vices were brought to light through his greed for money; and his example warns us to be on our guard against those who under a show of philosophy are false and treacherous in friendship, no less than against men wrapped in perfidy or notorious evil-doers' (Ann. xvi. 32).

² Nothing is known of this man.

³ Acc. to Tac. (Ann. xvi. 33) Eprius and his fellow-accuser Cossutianus received each five million sesterces (*i.e.* something like £50,000) for their accusation of Thræsea. Those were flourishing days for advocates if they took the right side.

made by the Consul Designate in accordance with ancient precedents, which to avoid opportunities for intrigue or ill feeling prescribed that embassies should be appointed by lot. Nothing had occurred to render this ancient practice obsolete, or to convert an act of respect to the Emperor into a means of insulting somebody. Homage was a thing which any man could offer. What they ought rather to aim at was to prevent certain fanatics from ruffling the feelings of an Emperor new to power, who was scanning with open mind the faces, as well as the words, of all around him. He was not unmindful of the times in which he had been born, nor of the form of polity which their fathers and grandfathers had set up. He admired the past, but he accepted the present; he prayed for good Emperors, but he put up with them of whatever kind they were. It was not his own speech, so much as the judgment of the Senate, that had brought about Thrasea's condemnation. Nero's cruel temper had played with the Senate by mock trials of that kind;¹ he himself had suffered as much from Nero's friendship as others had from exile. And finally, Helvidius might have all the firmness and the fortitude of a Cato or a Brutus, but he had been a member of the same slavish Senate as himself. Let him be advised not to set himself above the Emperor, nor attempt to lecture a man of Vespasian's age—a man who had gained Triumphal honours, and was the father of young sons. For as the worst of Emperors loved unlimited domination,

¹ The meaning of this somewhat obscure phrase seems to be this: Eprius is attempting to throw the blame off himself and to show that the Senate was no less responsible, both he and the Senate having acted under compulsion from Nero, who to gratify his cruelty had played upon the Senate by making it go through the farce of a free trial. Very similar is the statement in Ann. iii. 60, that Tiberius used to make a pretence of consulting the Senate;

vim principatus sibi firmans, imaginem antiquitatis senatui praebebat postolata provinciarum ad disquisitionem patrum mittendo. Another interpretation would make Eprius the subject to *inclusisse*; 'he had played upon, or amused, the cruelty of Nero by pretences of that kind.' But Eprius could hardly take credit for thus making a cat's paw of himself in the very assembly which he was addressing.

so even the best of them approved of some check on liberty.

These arguments, urged strenuously on either side, were received with diverse feelings. The party in favour of balloting prevailed, the neutrals throwing their weight on the side of precedent. And the more eminent persons took the same side, fearing to provoke jealousy should the choice fall upon themselves.

The embassy is chosen by ballot.

9 Another dispute followed.¹ Deploring the depleted condition of the Exchequer, the Praetors of the Treasury²—for the Treasury at that time was administered by Praetors—demanded some curtailment of expenditure. The burden being so heavy, and the difficulty of providing for it so great, the Consul Designate proposed to remit the matter to the Emperor; Helvidius moved that it should be left to the discretion of the Senate. On the question being put by the Consuls, Vulcaci³us Tertullinus, Tribune of the Plebs, put his veto⁴ on any decision being taken on so important a matter in the absence of the Emperor.⁴

A proposal of Helvidius is vetoed.

¹ Tac. is never so happy as when he has debates in the Senate to describe. The deeds of war which fill the *Histories* have given little opportunity of action to the Senate; Tac. eagerly seizes on the first occasion for recording its doings as soon as the close of the war suffered constitutional proceedings to revive. The *Annals* are full of the Senate's proceedings, recounted often at a length out of all proportion to their importance. Tac. is above all things a Senate man, and loves to record how that body sought to assert its ancient privileges. It is his very respect for the Senate, as he conceived it ought to be, that makes him so bitter in recording its acts of subservience.

On the occasion referred to above, though acknowledging that Tiberius had only granted to the Senate an *imaginem antiquitatis*, Tac. cannot conceal his pride that the Senate should have been consulted:—'A fine sight it

was that day to see the Senate inquiring into the privileges granted by our forefathers, or into treaties with our allies, or edicts issued by kings who had reigned before the days of Roman rule—nay, even into the worship of the Gods themselves—free, as in the days of old, to cancel or confirm' (Ann. iii. 60).

² Under the Republic, the Treasury had been the special charge of the quaestors: in Ann. xiii. 29 Tac. explains the changes in its management from the time of Augustus onwards. At the time here referred to, it was under the charge of the praetors. See Godley's note, and Furneaux on Ann. xiii. 29.

³ Acc. to Mommsen (Staats. ii. p. 309, n. 1) this is the last recorded instance of the Tribunes of the plebs exercising their ancient right of *intercessio*.

⁴ It was the policy of Helvidius and his party, which we may call the Opposition

Helvidius had proposed that the Capitol¹ should be restored at the public expense, with assistance from Vespasian. The moderate party in the Senate received the proposal in silence, and let it pass into oblivion: by others it was not forgotten.²

Musonius Rufus³ then made an attack upon Publius Celer, accusing him of having destroyed Barea Soranus by false testimony. This accusation seemed to threaten a revival of the hateful days of delation; but the accused was too contemptible a person, and too guilty, to find defenders. For the memory of Soranus was revered; whereas Celer, a professed philosopher, had borne witness against him, and thus betrayed and crushed a friend while professing to be an authority upon friendship.⁴ The case was put down for the day following; but now that men's minds were roused to think of revenge, it was no longer Musonius and Celer that they wanted to hear, but Helvidius and Marcellus and the others.⁵

Attack
upon
Publius
Celer.

of the time, to take every opportunity of claiming independent action for the Senate; and as the Emperors always professed deference for the Senate, and in theory held their power from its hands, they were often put in a somewhat tight place to evade a vote which it seemed within the right of the Senate to pass, without too palpably overriding it by authority. Their favourite device was to have the vote vetoed by a tribune of the plebs; for though in virtue of his *tribunicia potestas* the Emperor might himself veto any measure—including the veto of the tribune himself—the action of the tribune on the Emperor's behalf, founded on old constitutional usage, wore a popular instead of an arbitrary appearance.

¹ The word *Capitolium* here stands for the temple, not for the Capitol as a whole. So in chap. 53.

² *I.e.* they treasured up the independent action of Helvidius with a view to an accusation against him, or to prejudice him with Vespasian.

³ This was the fussy Stoic philosopher who tried to preach on peace to the

indignant Vitellian soldiers (iii. 81).

⁴ Ancient philosophers, and especially the Stoics, attached great importance to the subject of friends and friendships; a man's choice of friends, and his behaviour to them, holding a high place in their system of private ethics. One of Cicero's chief works is his treatise *De Amicitia*; and Aristotle in his *Ethics* devotes two whole books to the subject, regarding friendship as in itself a virtue, and almost the highest of the virtues, because it affords the surest basis for the practice of the virtuous life. It was therefore a specially heinous charge to bring against a Stoic philosopher that he had been a *proditor corruptorque amicitiae*—that branch of ethics which it was his peculiar duty to expound. See iii. 86 (in regard to Vitellius) and i. 15, where Galba lays it down in his speech to Piso that 'fidelity, freedom, and friendship are the choicest possessions of the human spirit.'

⁵ *I.e.* the Senate was all agog to hear the two protagonists, Helvidius Priscus and Eprius Marcellus, not caring for minor personages like Musonius Rufus.

II Things being in this state—the Fathers wrangling, the conquered party resentful, the victors destitute of authority, the State without law and without an Emperor—Mucianus entered the city, and at once took everything upon himself. The power of Primus Antonius and Varus Arrius was gone; Mucianus scarcely concealed his ire against them, though not showing it in his face. The citizens, quick at probing into animosities, made a complete transfer of their attentions: no one was canvassed and courted now but Mucianus. And he himself rose to the position, having an armed escort when he moved from one mansion or pleasure-garden to another, while by his state, his bearing, and his guards—in everything but in name—he claimed the authority of an Emperor.

Mucianus enters the city.

General consternation was caused by the death of Calpurnius Galerianus, the unoffending son of Gaius Piso,¹ whose illustrious name and youthful beauty had made him the subject of popular talk; while there were some who in the still disordered state of public affairs, and in a community which loves something new to talk about, had idly coupled his name with that of the Principate. Mucianus ordered him into military custody; and lest his death should attract more attention if it took place within the city, he was taken out to the 40th milestone on the Appian Road, and there bled to death.

Death of Calpurnius Galerianus.

Julius Priscus, who had commanded the Praetorians under Vitellius, put an end to himself, more out of shame than from necessity. Alfenus Varus²

Other deaths.

¹ Gaius Calpurnius Piso was the leader of the great conspiracy against Nero in the year A.D. 65 (Ann. xv. 48-73).

² It will be remembered that Julius Priscus and Alfenus Varus were the

joint Praetorian commanders who had marched out to meet the Flavians at the head of their men, and on being deserted by them had returned ignominiously to Rome (ii. 92, iii. 55 and 61).

survived his own poltroonery and ill fame. Asiaticus,¹ being a freedman, expiated his abuse of power by dying the death of a slave.

About the same time, the increasing rumours of 12
disasters in Germany² were received with little concern in Rome; men spoke of the destruction of armies, the capture of winter quarters, the revolt of the Gallic provinces, as if they were matters of indifference.³ What were the causes of this war—with

News of
disasters in
Germany.

¹ Asiaticus was the freedman-favourite of Vitellius (*foedum mancipium et malis artibus ambitiosum*) on whom Vitellius had conferred equestrian rank at a private banquet (ii. 57).

² With this chapter begins the history of the great revolt of Julius Civilis. The story of the causes, incidents, and consequences of this the last serious rising against Rome within the borders of the Empire, with an examination of its military features, is admirably given in Henderson's *Civil War and Rebellion in the Roman Empire*, chap. iii.

Tac. is not careful to give us the exact dates. In the *Histories*, which cover so short a period, he does not, as in the *Annals*, indicate exactly the point in his narrative when each year begins. The death of Vitellius occurred in the last days of December A.D. 69; so we may presume that the entry of Mucianus into Rome, as recorded in chap. 11, did not take place before the beginning of January A.D. 70. By that time the rebellion had been in full swing for more than two months, for we learn from chap. 31 that it was not till after it had been planned and begun that news of the capture of Cremona arrived in Germany. The battles before Cremona took place on October 27 and 28; for more than two whole months, until the fate of parties in Rome was decided, nothing could be done from headquarters in the way of restoring order on the frontiers. During that time the fortunes of Rome in the Gallic and German provinces had to be maintained by the slender forces on the spot, without hope of help from Italy. The main forces of the Empire being engaged in a life and death struggle for the capital, never was there a finer chance for that portion of the Empire in which the spirit

of liberty and nationality was strongest to regain its independence.

For the Roman troops on the spot, the difficulty was increased by the ambiguous character of the rising, as well as by the disastrous orders issued by the Flavian leaders to allow no fresh troops to be sent on from Germany to Italy. 'In its beginnings the real meaning of the war was hidden under the disguise of a movement in favour of Vespasian against the Emperor Vitellius, and the rising was not only encouraged, but even directly promoted, by the Flavian leaders.' (Henderson, p. 237.) But in reality, as soon appeared, the rising of the Gauls was one for liberty; to shake off the dominion of Rome and substitute an empire of their own. For one moment, when Rome seemed bleeding to death, Gauls and Germans—that is, the Germans included in the new German provinces—forgot their immemorial antagonism, and joined in an attempt to drive back their imperious conquerors. But what was the new empire to be? Was it to be Gallic or German? Which State was to take the lead? The moment these questions had to be faced, and Rome recovered her breath, the combination between Gauls and Germans fell to pieces as hopelessly as the alliance between the Balkan States in 1913.

³ The news of the first reverses on the Rhine made no impression on the citizens; their own situation was too desperate and uncertain to let them think of anything but themselves. And it was a positive relief to them to know that there was no fresh German army to be sprung upon Italy to make confusion worse confounded.

what violence it blazed forth among both foreign and allied¹ nations—I will now go back to explain.

The Batavians lived originally on the other side of the Rhine, forming part of the tribe of the Chatti.² Driven forth by domestic faction, they took possession of unoccupied lands on the extreme borders of Gaul, and also of an adjoining island washed in front by the ocean, by the river Rhine on the sides and rear.³ As they furnished only men and arms to the Empire, their wealth had remained undiminished—a rare thing for people in alliance with a power stronger than themselves; they had received a long training in the German wars, and they had afterwards added to their fame in Britain, whither their cohorts had been sent under the command of their own nobles after the

History of
the Ba-
tavians.

¹ The 'foreign' nations are the Germans; the 'allied' nations the Gauls.

² Tac. gives the same account of the origin of the Batavians in the *Germania*, chap. 29. The Chatti occupied the country E. of the Rhine and N. of the Taunus range, corresponding to the present provinces of Hessen-Nassau and Waldeck. The Batavians were already established in their Gallic territory in the time of Caesar (Bell. Gall. iv. 10). What the *sedition* was which caused their expulsion by the Chatti is not known.

³ It is by no means clear what was the extent of the famous (*nobilissima*, Plin. N. H. iv. 15, 29) *Insula Batavorum*. Henderson would confine it to the narrowest dimensions: 'The land enclosed by the two arms of the Rhine, the Lek on the north, and the Waal on the south, measuring some sixty miles in length, and about twelve at its greatest breadth, was known to the Romans as the "Island of the Batavians," *Insula Batavorum*' (*Civil War*, p. 232). As to the Waal being the southern boundary of the *Insula*, there is no doubt. Tac. gives a good description of it in Ann. ii. 6, where he tells us that where the Batavian territory begins, the Rhine divides into two, the Northern and more rapid branch skirting Germany till it falls into the Ocean, while the

broader and more placid branch on the Gallic side changes its name to Vahalis (modern *Waal*) until it joins the Meuse. It is to be noted that Tac. knows only of two branches: (1) the more rapid branch skirting Germany to the ocean; and (2) the left-hand branch which skirts Gallic territory; and as he speaks throughout of the right-hand branch as forming the frontier of Germany, it is more natural to suppose that he conceives the right-hand branch, which pursues its course straight to the northern ocean, as constituting the E. boundary of the *Insula*. Though now small in volume, and indeed again subdivided, that branch, still called the 'Old Rhine,' may have been more important in ancient times; it passes into the sea past Utrecht and Leyden. Tac. tells us that the ocean bounds the *Insula a fronte*, while the Rhine *tergum ac latera circumluit*. These words also seem to suit the larger view of the island, otherwise the *frons* and *tergum* would be reduced to mere narrow strips. Lastly, the *Insula* is generally spoken of as constituting the territory of the Batavians; that territory must have included much more than a narrow strip of 60 miles by 12. Part of the *Insula* was inhabited by the Canninefates (iv. 85), and the Batavians alone furnished a force of 10,000 to the Roman army (Henderson, p. 235).

ancient manner of the tribe.¹ They had also in their own country a picked body of horse, famed for their skill in swimming, who could dash across the Rhine, keeping hold of their arms and their horses, without any breaking of their ranks.²

Their two
leaders,
Civilis and
Paulus.

Two leaders of royal blood—Julius Paulus and 13
Julius³ Civilis—stood out above the rest. Paulus had been put to death by Fonteius Capito on a false⁴ charge of rebellion; Civilis, after being put into chains, sent to Nero, and set free by Galba, was again in peril of his life under Vitellius, when the army clamoured for his death; hence his wrath against Rome, and his hope of drawing advantage out of our disasters. Possessed of an astuteness unusual with barbarians, he would style himself Sertorius or Hannibal because of a deformity⁵ of face like to theirs; and lest he should be treated as an enemy if he revolted openly from Rome, he professed friendship for Vespasian, and enthusiasm for his cause: indeed, Antonius Primus wrote to him with instructions to divert the reinforcements ordered up by Vitellius,⁶ and to hold them

¹ It will be remembered that after the first battle of Bedriacum, Vitellius had ordered the Batavians off to Britain, along with the 14th, in order to act as a check upon that disaffected legion. The conflict between the two at Turin caused them to be again separated. Vitellius attached the unruly Batavians to himself, believing in their fidelity; but he soon had to send them off to Germany, *principium interno simul externoque bello parantibus fatis* (ii. 66 and 69).

² Tac. similarly describes in the *Agricola* (chap. 18) the cleverness of the Batavians in swimming: *quibus patrius nandi usus quo simul seque et arma et equos regunt*.

³ M reads *Claudius* Civilis for *Iulius*; but Julius seems to have been his true name; he was brother to Julius Paulus. It will be noted how many distinguished Gauls took the name of

the great Caesar.

⁴ Tac. states here that the charge of treason against Julius Paulus was false; but there must have been reasons for the army's strong feeling against the two brothers. It is evident that the Batavians had early begun to show that independence or insolence of which we have heard so much already, and which culminated in the revolt of Civilis.

⁵ Both Hannibal and Sertorius were blind of one eye.

⁶ Thus Antonius Primus, in the interests of Vespasian, had done all that was possible to add strength to the rising against Rome. The new levies, almost all of whom were ready to join in the revolt, he left in their own country, and so gave the leaders of the revolt a colourable excuse for all their suspicious movements:—'they were obeying their orders and fighting for Vespasian.'

back under pretence of a German rising.¹ The same advice had been given him personally by Hordeonius Flaccus, both as a supporter of Vespasian, and also in the interests of the empire, which would be brought to ruin if the war were rekindled and all those thousands of armed men were poured down into Italy.

14 Having thus resolved upon a revolt, Civilis began the new movement in the manner following, concealing in the meantime his ulterior designs until he could judge of the course of events. Vitellius had ordered a levy of the Batavian youth. Such a demand, burdensome in itself, was aggravated by the avarice and licentiousness² of the officials, who hunted up the old and the infirm in order to extract money for their exemption, while they would carry off the best looking of their young lads—and their boys are generally of fine stature—for purposes of lust. Indignation being thus aroused, the movers in the conspiracy induced the people to resist the levy. Civilis collected the chiefs and the most resolute of the people into a sacred grove under pretence of a banquet, and having waited till they were warmed with nocturnal revelry, he first discoursed on the glories of their race, and then recounted the wrongs, the robberies, and the other miseries of servitude:—

Civilis collects the chiefs ;

They were no longer treated as allies, as in former days, but as slaves ; when did a Legate with Imperial command ever come among them ?—though indeed his train would be oppressive and arrogant when he came. They were handed over to Prefects and Centurions, who when

and addresses them.

¹ The word *tumultus* was used properly of a war in Italy, and so of any rising which Roman pride would not dignify with the name of 'war.'

² The use of *luxus* here in the sense of personal profligacy is made quite clear by the context. See n. on i. 13.

*gorged with blood and plunder were exchanged for others, to fill whose pockets new forms and names of plunder had to be devised. They were now threatened with a levy to separate children from parents, brothers from brothers, as if for ever. Never had the fortunes of Rome sunk so low. The Roman camps contained nothing but old men and plunder; let them only lift up their eyes, and not tremble before the empty name of Legions. They themselves had a powerful force of both horse and foot; the Germans were their kinsmen; the Gallic States had ambitions like their own; even to Rome herself war would not be unwelcome. If fortune failed them, they might make a merit of their action with Vespasian: if they won, who could call the victors to account?*¹

He sends
envoys to
the Canninefates,

This speech having been received with enthusiasm, 15
Civilis bound down all present by the barbarous rites and curses of their tribe. He then sent envoys to secure the co-operation of the Canninefates,² a tribe inhabiting part of the Island, and akin to the Batavians in origin, tongue, and valour, though inferior to them in numbers. Next, he sent secret messengers to gain over the Batavian cohorts which formed part of the British auxiliaries, and which had been sent, as I have said above, to Germany, and were now quartered at Mogontiacum.³ Among the Canninefates there was a man of illustrious birth and rude courage called Brinno, whose father had often fought against Rome, and had been allowed, unpunished, to scoff at the absurd campaigns of Gaius. His very name, as that of a family of rebels, found favour for him; he was placed upon a shield after the custom of their

¹ A fine epigram. Conquerors have no excuses to make; they need give no reasons. For *imputaturos*, see n. on i. 55.

² This people inhabited not only the

west part of the Insula, but also territory to the north along the sea.

³ Thus the Batavian cohorts had got no further than Mogontiacum (*Mainz*), the military capital of Upper Germany.

tribe, swung to and fro upon men's shoulders, and thus chosen as their chief.

Brinno at once called the Frisii,¹ a Transrhenane tribe, into the field, and broke into the winter quarters of two cohorts stationed near the Ocean. No preparations had been made against an attack, nor was the force strong enough to beat it off had it been foreseen; so the camp was captured and plundered. The enemy then fell upon the sutlers and Roman traders who had spread themselves about the country as in time of peace, threatening at the same time to destroy the forts; as these could not be defended, they were set on fire by the Prefects of the cohorts. The standards of the horse and foot,² with all the soldiers there, were then brought together at the upper part of the Island, under the command of Aquilius, a Chief Centurion; but it was an army in name only, seeing that Vitellius had drawn off the main strength of the cohorts, putting arms into the hands of an unwarlike crowd from the neighbouring Nervians and Cugerni³ in their stead.

16 Thinking it best to proceed by craft, Civilis boldly blamed the Prefects for deserting these forts:—*Let the men*, he said, *return to their several winter quarters; he*

whose leader Brinno calls out the Frisians,

and attacks the Romans.

Civilis gives treacherous advice;

¹ The Frisii, who were a semi-independent tribe, lived to the north of the Batavians and round the Zuider Zee. They had made a highly successful rising against Roman exactions in A.D. 28 (Ann. iv. 72-74). They were settled on certain lands by Corbulo in A.D. 47 (Ann. xi. 19); but broke out again with some success in A.D. 58. On that occasion Tac. relates a delightful story of the visit of their two so-called kings to Rome (Ann. xiii. 54).

² The phrase *signa vexillaque* is used here, as in ii. 18, to denote an entire army, horse as well as foot. The word *vexillum*, as we have seen, is used in more senses than one. Any special detachment was ranged under a *vexillum*

(see n. on ii. 18); the word is specially used of the standards of a maniple in Ann. i. 20 (*manipuli Nauportum missi vexilla convellunt*); it is also specially used of a cavalry standard, as in ii. 11 (*equitum vexilla cum legione prima*). The phrase *signa vexillaque* is used in the same sense as here in chap. 34 below.

³ Reading *Cugernorum* with Müller, instead of the unsatisfactory *Germanorum* of M. The Cugerni were on the left bank of the lower Rhine, near where the 'Insula' begins. The Nervii, in whom Caesar found such formidable enemies, occupied the lower valley of the Scheldt. They were the chief tribe of the Belgae. See map at end of this Volume.

would himself, with the cohort under his command, put down the rising of the Canninefates. That this advice was given treacherously, in order that the cohorts might be more easily overcome if dispersed, and that not Brinno, but Civilis, was the real leader of the war, was gradually made manifest by certain indications which the Germans, with their love of war, were unable long to conceal. This plot having failed, Civilis proceeded to open hostilities, disposing the Canninefates, the Frisii, and the Batavians in separate columns. Opposite to them the Roman force took up a position not far from the river Rhine, while the ships, which had put in at the same point after the burning of the forts, were drawn up with their bows facing the enemy.

then proceeds to open hostilities ;

and gains an important victory.

Scarcely had the battle begun when a Tungrian¹ cohort carried over its standards to Civilis: dismayed by this unexpected treachery, our soldiers were cut down by allies and enemies alike. There was similar treachery on board the ships. Those of the rowers who were Batavians, pretending ignorance, impeded the sailors and the fighting men² in the discharge of

¹ The Tungri, like the Batavians, were a German tribe who had taken possession of a rich part of Belgium in the mid-valley of the Meuse.

² We have here the three classes of men employed on board ship: the *milites* or fighting marines, called also *propugnatores*; the *nautae* or sailors; and lowest of all, the *remiges*, the rowers. The *nautae* seem to have been freedmen, the *remiges* mostly slaves.

The account of this battle in Tac. is difficult to follow; but this much can be made out. The Canninefates had surprised all the fortified positions in the W. part of the island; the garrisons had fled and left them to be burnt. His treacherous invitation to the Romans to re-occupy these positions having failed, Civilis resorts to open hostilities with his three contingents, and drives the Romans to the E. end

of the Insula. The Romans retreat along the N. side (or right bank) of the Vahalis, supported on their right by their flotilla. At some extreme point—Henderson supposes near Arnheim—the Romans make a stand; behind them, as a support, are moored the ships, with their bows turned towards the shore so as to offer resistance to an advancing enemy. The land force is defeated, by treachery and otherwise, and driven back with heavy loss to the ships. The ships are over-mastered, the crews yield or go over to the enemy, and assist in backing out the ships into the river; the centurions and captains who remain faithful are slain, and the whole fleet is captured. What portion (if any) of the land force survived, and by what means these crossed the river and escaped, is not recorded.

their duty; they then pulled the other way, directing the vessels stern foremost towards the hostile bank, and finally butchered the steersmen and Centurions who refused to join them, until at last the whole fleet of four-and-twenty ships were either captured or went over to the enemy.

17 This was a notable victory for the moment, and of great consequence for the future. It provided the insurgents with the arms and ships which they needed, and it spread their fame throughout Germany and Gaul¹ as the champions of liberty. The German tribes at once sent envoys with offers of help, while Civilis employed policy and presents to attract the co-operation of the Gauls, sending back to their own people the commanders of the captured cohorts, and permitting the cohorts themselves to remain or depart as they preferred:—*They would have an honourable service if they remained; if they departed, they might take with them the spoils captured from the Romans.*

The German tribes offer help to Civilis.

At the same time he reminded them, in private conversations, of *all the wrongs which they had endured during all those years, and of the miserable slavery to which was given the false name of peace. The Batavians, though exempt from tribute, had taken up arms against their common masters; they had routed and conquered the Romans in the first encounter. What if Gaul were to shake off the yoke? What would Italy then have left to her? It was by the blood of the Provinces that the Provinces were conquered. Let them not think of what had befallen Vindex and his army. It was the Batavian cavalry that had crushed the Aedui and the Arverni;*²

Civilis urges the Gauls to strike a blow for freedom.

¹ The phrase *Germanias Galliasque* denotes in a general way Gaul and Germany, without special reference to the Roman provinces.

² This passage shows that Vindex

had been supported by the Aedui and the Arverni, and that the Batavians had fought against him, having been brought over from Britain for that purpose.

the Belgians had formed part of the forces of Verginius; and if they looked at it aright, it was by Gallic armies that Gaul had been subdued. But now they were all of one party; they had, besides, such military discipline as prevailed in Roman camps; they had with them the veteran cohorts before which the Legions of Otho had succumbed. Let the men of Syria, of Asia, and of the East—long used to kingly rule—be slaves; in Gaul, there were men yet living who had been born before the days of tribute. It was not long since Quintilius Varus had been slain,¹ and slavery driven forth from Germany—and that when not an Emperor Vitellius, but a Caesar Augustus had been challenged to the combat. Nature had given liberty even to dumb animals; valour was the peculiar excellence of man; it was to the valorous that the Gods gave their aid. With their hands free, and their forces unimpaired, let them fall upon a distracted and exhausted enemy:² while some were following Vitellius and some Vespasian, there was a way open for the overthrow of both.

With his thoughts thus bent upon Gaul and Germany, Civilis was not far—had his plans prospered—18 from becoming King over most powerful and wealthy nations. His first efforts were furthered by the fact that Flaccus Hordeonius³ affected to ignore them; but

Apathy of
Hordeonius
Flaccus;
he at last
bestirs
himself.

¹ In allusion to the terrible disaster of A.D. 9 when Quintilius Varus and his three legions were destroyed in the *Saltus Teutoburgiensis* by the Germans under Arminius.

² These words give the key of the position. Vitellius had drained the German provinces of their best troops; what remained were at the best divided in their sympathies between Vespasian and Vitellius; and finally all the auxiliary troops, and a large part of the legions themselves, recruited in the country, had the strongest sympathy with the national cause.

The sentence *proinde arriperent vacui occupatos, integri fessos*, well illustrates the difficulty of rendering literally

into English the epigrammatic phrases of Tacitus. Spooner gives the exact literal translation: 'Let us who are at leisure fall on those who have their hands full, us with our strength unimpaired on them weary with strife.'

³ Flaccus Hordeonius, or, as he was more properly called, Hordeonius Flaccus, was at this time the slow and incapable governor of Upper Germany; i.e. of all the land bordering the Rhine south of Coblenz. His headquarters were at Mogontiacum (*Mainz*), where he had two legions under his command, the 4th (*Macedonica*) and the 22nd (*Primigenia*), or rather such remnants of them as had not marched to Italy with the Vitellians.

when messengers brought the alarming news that our camp had been stormed, our cohorts annihilated, and the Roman name driven out of the Batavian island, he ordered the Legate Munius Lupercus, who was in command of two Legions¹ in winter quarters, to march against the enemy. Lupercus hurriedly took over some legionaries that were on the spot, some Ubian² troops close by, and some Treveran³ cavalry that were quartered not far off. To these he added a wing of Batavian horse which had long been disaffected, but which now pretended to be loyal in order to gain a greater reward by deserting the Romans in the course of the engagement.

Civilis surrounded himself with the standards of the captured cohorts, that his own men might have their recent triumph before their eyes, and that the enemy's hearts might quail at the memory of their defeat. In the rear he placed his own mother and sisters, together with all the wives and little children of his men, to incite them to victory, or to shame them if they gave way. And when the battle-cry of the men and the yells of the women rang out from their line, it was responded to by but a feeble cheer from the Legions and the cohorts. The Batavian

Defeat or desertion of the auxiliaries; the legions make good their retreat to Vetera.

¹ These, as we have seen, were the 5th (*Alauda*) and the 15th (*Primi-genia*), both quartered at Vetera. Vetera (short for *Vetera Castra*) was the main fortress of Lower Germany. It was situated on the left bank of the Rhine, below Wesel, about 25 miles S. of the bifurcation of the Rhine. Of the 5th legion a mere skeleton had been left; of the 15th, only a detachment had marched south. Tacitus tells us that the two together scarcely amounted to 5000 men—not equal to the strength of one entire legion.

² The Ubii, on whose territory was situated the Colonia Agrippinensis (the modern *Cologne*), were the most faithful of the German allies to Rome on

the W. side of the river. Originally occupying the E. bank of the Rhine, they had been brought over to the W. side by Agrippa in B.C. 37 or 38; and his grand-daughter Agrippina the younger, who had been born there, established in it a colony of veterans in the year A.D. 50 (Ann. xii. 27). Loyal and favoured as the Ubii had been, they were tempted, or coerced, into joining the revolt for a moment, but with the first opportunity they returned to their allegiance (chaps. 55, 63, 77, and v. 24).

³ The Treveri were on the middle Moselle: the modern *Trèves* preserves the name of their chief town. See n. on Ann. i. 41.

cavalry at once deserted and turned against us, thus exposing our left wing; but, desperate as the case was, the legionaries held fast to their arms and their formation. The Ubian and Treveran auxiliaries, ignominiously put to flight, dispersed through the country and were hotly pursued by the Germans; the Legions, meanwhile, made good their retreat to the camp known by the name of Vetera. Claudius Labeo, the Prefect of the Batavian horse, having opposed Civilis in some municipal dispute, was sent away to the Frisii, lest either he should sow the seed of disaffection among his countrymen if allowed to remain, or their resentment should be aroused by his death.

Insolence
of the
auxiliaries
ordered off
to Rome;

Just at this time the auxiliaries of the Batavians and the Canninefates who, by the orders of Vitellius, were on their march for Rome, were caught up by a messenger dispatched by Civilis.¹ They at once burst out with insolent demands, asking for a donative as a reward for their march, together with double pay, and an addition to the number of their cavalry—things certainly which had been promised by Vitellius, but which they now asked for, not with the expectation of getting them, but to provide an excuse for their defection. Hordeonius conceded much; but this only made the men press more urgently for what they knew he would refuse them. Treating his authority with contempt, they made off for Lower Germany to join Civilis. 19

they join
Civilis.

Vacillating
conduct of
Hordeonius.

Hordeonius then called together his Tribunes and Centurions for a consultation, and asked them, *Should he employ force against the disobedient troops?* Then

¹ Thus it appears that the Batavian cohorts had received fresh orders from Vitellius to return to Rome. How far they had got, or whether they had started at all, is not clear. As Horde-

onius Flaccus was still with them, it would seem that they had not left Mogontiacum: and the words *in urbem pergerent* need not mean more than that they were under orders to start.

what with his own natural timidity, and the alarm of his subordinates at the doubtful attitude of the auxiliaries and the large number of new recruits in the Legions, he resolved to keep the soldiers within the camp ; but soon again, repenting of his decision, and at the instigation of the very men whose advice he had followed, he wrote to Herennius Gallus, the Legate in command of the 1st Legion at Bonn, telling him that he was going to follow up the enemy, and ordering him to stop the passage of the Batavians :—*He himself with his army would fasten on to their rear.*

Now if Hordeonius and Gallus had both set their forces in motion, one on the one side and one on the other, the enemy might have been closed in between the two and overwhelmed. But Hordeonius failed to do his part, and wrote a second letter to Gallus advising him not to molest the departing force ; hence a suspicion was created that the war was one of the Legates' making, and that all the mishaps, past or apprehended, were due, not to the slackness of the troops or to the strength of the enemy, but to the treachery of the Generals.

20 When the Batavians drew near to the camp at Bonn,¹ they sent on messengers to put before Herennius Gallus the demands of the auxiliaries :—

The Roman forces defeated before Bonn, and driven back into their camp.

They were not at war with the Romans, for whom they had fought so often, but, being worn out by long and unprofitable service, they yearned for their native country and for rest. If unopposed, they would injure no man in their march ; if met by arms, the sword should make a way for them.

The Legate hesitated ; but the soldiers forced him

¹ Bonn was held by one legion—the 1st (*Germanica*), under the command of Herennius Gallus. But the *vexilla* of

this legion had marched to Italy with Valens.

to try the chance of battle. A body of 3,000 legionaries, some hastily-raised Belgian cohorts, and a cowardly impudent crew of camp-followers and rustics who could bluster loud enough before it came to fighting, rushed out of all the gates to envelop the inferior numbers of the Batavians. But those experienced veterans formed themselves into columns as deep as they were broad, secure alike in front, flank, and rear, and thus broke through the thin Roman line. The Belgians giving way, the legionaries were driven in, and fled for the gates and ramparts. Here a great slaughter took place; the trenches were piled up with dead bodies, our men perishing not only of wounds inflicted by the enemy, but also from the crush, and in many cases by their own weapons.¹

Avoiding the Agrippinensian Colony, the victorious Batavians refrained from further acts of hostility during the rest of their march, giving out as an excuse for the battle at Bonn that, *They had asked for peace; when that was denied them they had acted in self-defence.*

Professing
allegiance
to Ves-
pasian,
Civilis
makes an
appeal to
the legions
in Vetera ;

The arrival of these veteran cohorts gave Civilis 21 the command of a regular army; but his respect for the power of Rome made him still waver in his plans, and after compelling all with him to take the oath of allegiance to Vespasian,² he sent envoys to the two Legions, which had retired to Vetera after their recent defeat, asking them to do the same. The answer returned was that:—

They needed no advice from a traitor or an enemy ;

¹ What *ruina* means is not clear. Spooner interprets it of the 'fall of the earth-work, which might well have precipitated them on to their own weapons.' But the enemy never stormed or pene-

trated into the Roman camp; they only drove the Romans into it.

² Thus Civilis was still pretending to act on behalf of Vespasian.

their Emperor was Vitellius, for whom they would fight loyally to their last breath. It was not for a Batavian renegade to control the destinies of Rome, but to await the just penalty for his crime.

Inflamed to wrath by this answer, Civilis hurried the whole Batavian nation to arms. The Bructeri and the Tencteri¹ flocked to his standard, and all Germany was roused by his summons to plunder and to glory.

22 To meet these threats of gathering war, the Legates Munius Lupercus and Numisius Rufus² proceeded to strengthen their walls and ramparts. They destroyed the buildings which during the long peace had sprung up into a kind of city³ near the camp, lest they might be of service to the enemy. But no care was taken to bring in supplies; and as plundering was permitted, the stores that would have sufficed for their necessities for a long time were wantonly consumed in a few days.⁴

Keeping the main body of Batavians to form his

it is rejected, and Civilis summons all Germany to war.

The legates strengthen the camp at Vetera.

Formidable approach of

¹ Both German tribes; the Bructeri were on the upper Ems, the Tencteri occupied the banks of the Rhine immediately opposite to the Ubii and their city *Colonia Agrippinensis*.

² Numisius Rufus is supposed to have been the legate of the 16th legion, stationed at Novaesium.

³ Wherever a military station was established in the provinces, civilian Romans of the middle classes would settle beside it for business purposes, and thus gradually a city would be formed. We constantly hear of such *negotiatores*, sometimes causing trouble, sometimes falling a prey to insurgents. It was thus that the city of London was formed; it was thus that she suffered from the conquering advance of Boudicca, when Suetonius Paulinus was obliged to retire and leave that city to its fate in A.D. 61. No fewer than 70,000 citizens and allies are said to have been then massacred: *ad septuaginta milia civium et sociorum is*

quae memoravi locis (i.e. London, Verulamium or St. Albans, and Colchester) cecidisse constitit (Ann. xiv. 33). See Dr. Haverfield's *Romanisation of Britain*, p. 13: 'The legionary fortresses collected settlers — traders, women, veterans,—under the shelter of their ramparts; these formed centres of Roman speech and life, and often developed into cities. Italians, especially of the upper middle class, merchants and others, emigrated freely and formed tiny Roman settlements, often in districts where no troops were stationed.' So in Hist. i. 67 we are told of the town that had gathered round the *Vicus Aquensis* (modern *Baden*) in Helvetian territory, *longa pace in modum municipii exstructus locus*.

⁴ Exactly the same thing happened in the days of lax discipline when the Flavian army was short of provisions in its southward advance after the capture of Cremona (iii. 50).

Civilis,
both by
land and
water.

centre, Civilis gave a savage appearance to his army by crowding both banks of the Rhine with swarms of Germans. His cavalry scoured the plains, while at the same time his ships were rowed up the river. On the one bank were the standards of the veteran cohorts; on the other, the images of the various wild beasts which it is the custom of the several tribes to carry with them into battle¹ were brought out from their woods and groves—a medley of Roman and foreign equipment which was terrifying to the besieged. The besiegers, on the other hand, felt confidence in the extent of the ramparts, which, though constructed for a force of two Legions, had now scarcely 5,000 armed Romans to defend them; but there was also a multitude of camp-followers who had gathered there when the war broke out, and who would be of service for the defence.

His desperate
attempts at
assault are
beaten
back.

Part of the camp was on a gentle slope; part 23
could be approached on the level. Augustus had intended that this station should serve to watch and keep back the Germans: never had he dreamt of such a disaster as that they should venture to attack our Legions. Hence no labour had been expended either on the site or on the fortifications; it was presumed that an armed force would be sufficient. The Batavians and the several Trans-rhenane tribes took up separate positions for the better display of the special valour of each, and began the attack from a distance; but afterwards, when most of their missiles stuck harmlessly on the towers and battlements, while they themselves suffered from stones rolled down upon them from above, they rushed forward with a yell to assail the

¹ For this German custom see Germ. 7.

rampart. Some planted ladders against the walls ; others advanced under tortoise-shelters formed by their comrades ; while some, over-impetuous at the start, and pushing their advantage too far, were clambering on to the top when they were hurled back by sword-thrusts and blows from other weapons, and overwhelmed by stakes and javelins.

Yet the lust of plunder held them up against all difficulties. They ventured even to bring up engines to which they were unused, and of which they had little skill ; captives and deserters taught them how to put together a wooden structure in the form of a bridge, which they placed upon wheels and pushed forward, some taking their stand upon the top, whence they fought as if from a mound, whilst others, concealed within, undermined the walls. But this clumsy erection was destroyed by volleys of stones from catapults ;¹ blazing spears were hurled down from engines on to those who were constructing the mantlets and penthouses, and even the assailants themselves were pelted with fire-brands.

At last the enemy, despairing of an assault, resolved to bide their time. They knew that the camp contained supplies for only a few days, and that there were many non-combatants within :—*Famine, they thought, would breed treachery ; fidelity sat lightly upon slaves ; and there were the chances of war to hope from.*

The enemy resolve to bide their time.

24 Meanwhile Hordeonius had learned that the camp was under siege. Dispatching messengers throughout Gaul to summon up auxiliaries, he entrusted a picked body of legionaries to Dillius Vocula, Legate

Hordeonius sends Vocula to the rescue.

¹ For the *ballista* and the *catapulta* see n. on iii. 23. Both engines alike were called *tormenta* (from *torquere*) from the nature of the propulsion applied.

of the 22nd Legion,¹ with orders to hurry by forced marches along the bank of the Rhine; he himself, being in ill health, went by water.²

Wrath of
the soldiers
against
Hordeonius.

Now Hordeonius was in bad odour with his soldiers. They openly complained that:—

He had suffered the Batavian cohorts to leave Mogontiacum; he had feigned ignorance of the rising of Civilis; he was inviting the co-operation of Germans. He had done as much to advance the cause of Vespasian as either Antonius Primus or Mucianus. Open and armed hostility could be openly repelled: tricks and treachery were unseen, and therefore not to be eluded. While Civilis was up in arms, arraying his line of battle, Hordeonius was issuing from his bedchamber and from his bed whatever orders might be of service to the enemy. Their own thousands of brave and armed men were under the command of one sickly old man: how much better to slay their betrayer, and rescue from his evil-omened hands their valour and their fortunes!

Heated by speeches like these, the men were still further infuriated by the arrival of a dispatch from Vespasian. As this could not be kept secret, Hordeonius read it aloud in a general assembly; and having put into chains the messengers who had brought it, sent them on to Vitellius.

No less
wrathful is
the legion
at Bonn.

The men's wrath having been thus appeased, they 25
arrived at the winter-quarters of the 1st Legion at Bonn. Here the soldiers were still more incensed,

¹ The 22nd legion (*Primigenia*) had its headquarters at Mogontiacum. The main part of this legion had marched south with the Vitellians. Its commander Dillius Vocula, mentioned here for the first time, is the only one of the Roman generals on the spot who exhibited energy, resource, and courage in this war, alike in dealing with the enemy and with his own mutinous

soldiery.

² The reading is uncertain, but taking M as it seems to stand, it is scarcely possible in all Tac. to find a sentence so curt, so formless, as this: *ipse navibus invalidus corpore, invisus militibus*. To soften it a little, F. inserts *invadit* after *navibus*; Her. inserts *vectus*. But the addition is unnecessary.

throwing upon Hordeonius the blame of the recent disaster :—

It was by his orders that they had marched against the Batavians, on the assurance that the Legions from Mogontiacum were following them up from behind ; that help had not come up, and their slaughter was due to his betrayal of them. The other armies had heard nothing of these events ; their own Emperor had not been informed of them ; with so many Provinces to come to the rescue this sudden revolt might easily have been extinguished.

Hordeonius read aloud to the army copies of all the letters which he was sending out for help through Gaul, Britain, and Spain, and he established the evil practice of handing all dispatches to the standard-bearers, who read them out to the soldiers before the Generals had seen them. One insubordinate soldier he ordered to be put into chains, more for the sake of asserting his authority than because one man alone was guilty.

The army¹ now marched from Bonn to the Agripinensian Colony, whither Gallic auxiliaries continued to flock in, since the Gauls at the beginning aided actively the cause of Rome ; but before long, as the German strength increased, many of the Gallic states took up arms against us in the hope of recovering their liberty, and with the ambition, if they shook off our yoke, of founding an Empire of their own.

Meanwhile the wrath of the Legions kept rising ; they were not to be cowed by the arrest of one man : nay, that same man accused the General of being privy to the revolt, pretending that he himself had

The army
marches to
Cologne.

¹ This force consisted of the 1st legion (*Germanica* ; such part of it as had not left for Italy) which had been stationed at Bonn under Herennius Gallus, to-

gether with the relieving force (parts of the 4th and 22nd) which had come from Mogontiacum.

carried messages between Hordeonius and Civilis, and that he was now being punished under a false charge because he could testify to the truth. With great courage, Vocula ascended the tribunal, and ordered the man to be seized and carried off, bawling loudly all the time, to execution. This terrified the evil-disposed; the better sort obeyed the order; and as all, with common consent, asked to have Vocula for their General, Hordeonius handed over to him the command.

Vocula
takes over
the com-
mand.

Difficulties
of the
Roman
army;

There was much to exasperate the soldiers in 26 their present fractious temper. They were short of pay and corn;¹ the Gauls refused to supply either tribute or a levy; a drought unexampled in those regions² had made the Rhine almost unnavigable; their communications were restricted, and as pickets had to be placed all along the banks of the river to prevent the Germans from crossing it, the selfsame cause at once diminished the supply of food, and increased the number of the consumers. The ignorant soldiers regarded the drought itself as a prodigy, as though even the rivers—those ancient bulwarks of our empire³—were failing us: what in time of peace would have been called chance or natural law, was now spoken of as Destiny or the Divine wrath.⁴

¹ The crop had been short because of the drought.

² Tac. had as bad an opinion of the climate of Germany as most Englishmen have of that of Scotland. See Germ. 5 and cp. *nam (rarum illi caelo siccitate et amnibus modicis inoffensum iter properaverat* (Ann. i. 56).

³ The great rivers had not been so very long established as the proper frontiers of the Roman Empire. Mr. Pelham points out (*Essays on Roman History*, pp. 165 foll.) that the Republic knew of no permanent frontiers. Augustus laid the foundation of such a system; but it was only under the Flavian and

Antonine Emperors, when increasing pressure from without began to be felt, that a regular frontier system was constructed. Horace would acknowledge no limit to the universal Empire of Rome (Od. iii. 3, 53-56); but Tac. was beginning to perceive that Rome's frontiers were too weakly guarded, and especially that Augustus had been over-confident in not fortifying *Vetera* (chap. 23).

⁴ M here reads *dei*, which is supposed to stand for *dei*. But I cannot bring myself to believe that Tac. here meant the God of the Rhine. The passage quoted from the speech of Civilis in v. 17 (*Rhenum et Germaniae deos in*

On entering Novaesium,¹ the army was joined by the 16th Legion; the Legate Herennius Gallus was now associated with Vocula in the command. Not venturing to advance against the enemy, they constructed a camp at a place called Gelduba,² where they sought to harden the men by drill, by working at fortifications and entrenchments, and by other military exercises. And hoping that plunder would inflame their valour, Vocula led out part of the force against the neighbouring villages of the Cugerni, who had joined Civilis; the rest of the army remained with Herennius Gallus.

it reaches
Novaesium.

Camp built
at Gelduba.

27 Now it happened that a ship laden with corn ran aground in shallow water not far from the camp. The Germans attempted to haul the ship over to their own bank. Not able to stomach this, Gallus sent over a cohort to the rescue; the Germans were reinforced, fresh auxiliaries came up by degrees, and the affair ended in a regular battle. After inflicting heavy losses on our soldiers, the Germans carried off the ship; the defeated men, according to the manner of the time, instead of blaming their own cowardice, accused the Legate of treachery: they dragged him from his tent, tore off his clothes and beat him, bidding him say, *For what sum, and with what accomplices, had he betrayed the army?*

Fight over
a corn-
ship.

Hordeonius
accused of
treachery
and as-
saulted.

aspectu) does not necessarily imply that the Rhine was a deity; though in the mouth of Civilis it might more naturally have that meaning. I would either read *deum* with Halm and Nipperdey, or suppose that *ira dei* is used in a general sense for 'the wrath of God'—'divine wrath.' The idea of the wrath of the Gods in general—*ira deum* or *ira caelestis*—is a favourite one with Tac. Horace repeatedly uses the singular *Deus* for the Gods in general: *Siccis omnia nam dura Deus proposuit* (Od. i. 18, 3); *insignem attenuat Deus* (Od. i. 34, 13);

Epod. 13, 7, etc.

¹ Novaesium, where the 16th legion (*Gallica*) was quartered, was 22 miles below Cologne, and about 35 above Vetera. The legion was far from being complete: the *vexilla* of that legion were with Caecina when he marched from Rome to meet the Flavians (ii. 100).

² The reading here is defective, but the sense is clear. Gelduba (*Gelb* or *Gellep*) was on the way from Novaesium to Vetera.

Then their wrath against Hordeonius revived:—*Hordeonius*, they declared, *had plotted the treachery; Gallus had been his instrument.* At last, terrified by threats of instant death, Gallus himself joined in the accusation against Hordeonius: Hordeonius was thrown into chains and only released on the return of Vocula.

Vocula
puts down
the
mutiny.

Next day, Vocula put the ringleaders of the mutiny to death: so great, in that army, were the extremes of insubordination and submissiveness. The common soldiers, without doubt, were faithful to Vitellius; the superior officers favoured Vespasian. Hence an alternation of insubordination and punishment, a mixture of lawless violence with obedience: men whom nothing could control would submit to punishment.¹

Active
measures
of Civilis;

During this time immense accessions of strength 28 were pouring in to Civilis from all the tribes of Germany, who sent in noble hostages as a pledge of loyalty. The lands of the Ubii and the Treveri he ordered to be ravaged by the tribes severally nearest to them, while another force was ordered to cross the Meuse to harass the Menapii² and the Morini and the outlying parts of Gaul. Both districts were plundered; but the Ubii were the more severely treated because, though of German origin, they had forsworn their native land, and adopted the Roman name of Agrippinensians. Some cohorts of theirs in

¹ The phrase *ut contineri non possent qui puniri poterant* is curious: 'the men who were able to be punished (*i.e.* were ready to submit to punishment), could not be controlled.' The more natural expression would have been to say of the officers that 'they could punish, but could not control, their men.' The passage illustrates the curious mixture of discipline and indiscipline which prevailed in the Roman armies during the Civil War.

In spite of the seeming license of the time, the legionaries were unable to shake themselves free of the old habits of obedience.

² The Menapii were another of the tribes that had been driven across the Rhine; they had settled in Gallia Belgica, between the Scheldt and the Meuse. The Morini dwelt on the coast, further west, opposite Britain, and extended as far as Calais; hence Virgil calls them *extremi hominum* (Aen. viii. 727).

the village of Marcodurum¹ were cut to pieces: being at some distance from the river they had neglected measures of defence. The Ubii did not fail to retaliate by predatory excursions into Germany; successful at first, they were cut off in the end, being indeed throughout the war distinguished more for loyalty than for good fortune.

Strengthened thus by the crushing of the Ubii, and elated by his successes, Civilis pressed on the siege of the Legions, keeping strict guard to prevent any secret intelligence of coming help from finding its way in to them. The engines and the siege-works he assigned to the Batavians. When the Transrhenane tribes clamoured for battle, he bade them storm the rampart; when beaten back, he told them to try again: for their numbers were great, and their losses of no account.

he presses
on the
siege of
Vetera.

29 Night brought no end to their labours. They piled up logs of wood all round, and set fire to them; then as each grew warm with wine and feasting, they rushed with senseless bravery to the fight. Their missiles, discharged in the dark, had no effect; whereas the light thrown upon the ranks of the barbarians enabled the Romans to mark down all who made themselves conspicuous by their daring or their decorations. Perceiving this, Civilis gave orders to extinguish the fires and trust all to the chaos of a night combat.² Then followed a scene of casual encounters, amid discordant cries; no one

Failure of
a desperate
night
attack.

¹ The modern *Düren*, on the river Roer; not far from the modern Aix-la-Chapelle.

² A truly Tacitean expression—as striking as illogical—*misceri cuncta tenebris et armis iubet*. The difficulty of translating such a phrase is again

well brought out by Spooner's literal rendering—'Orders the whole scene to be plunged into darkness and the confused din of arms.' Very similar is the phrase in iii. 22 where Tac. speaks of *ordinem agminis disiecti per iram ac tenebras*.

could see how to direct or to avoid a blow: men would turn round, straining themselves in the direction of a shout. Valour was of no avail; all was chance and confusion; and many a brave man was struck down by the weapon of a coward. The Germans fought with blind rage; the Romans, inured to danger, hurled down upon them with deadly effect ponderous stones and iron-shod beams. Whenever the sound of undermining was heard, or the affixing of ladders brought the enemy within reach, our men would dash them back with the bosses of their shields, and follow up the attack with javelins; those who made their way on to the walls they stabbed with their swords.

Thus passed the night; the dawn revealed new methods of attack.

Various
devices
used on
both sides.

The Batavians had built a tower, two stories high, 30 which they brought close up to the Praetorian gate,¹ where the ground was level; our men dashed it down by means of huge beams and battering-rams, killing many of those who were standing upon it. A successful sally was at once made upon the panic-stricken enemy. The legionaries also exhibited their skill by various ingenious contrivances. What terrified the enemy most was a balanced and swinging machine, which being suddenly let down caught up one or more of their number, and then, by a shifting of the weights, snatched them up suddenly past the faces of their comrades, and dropped them within the camp.² Giving up all

¹ The Praetorian gate in a Roman camp was always on the side nearest the enemy, and therefore most liable to attack.

² This was a machine worked on the lever principle, not unlike a crane. At one end was a short arm, with a heavy

weight fastened to it, at the other a long arm with hooks attached. These hooks could suddenly be let down, catch hold, be lifted up, and then whisked round to deposit the capture within the camp.

hope from an assault, Civilis settled down again to a leisurely blockade, while by messages and promises he sought to shake the loyalty of the Legions.

The siege turned into a blockade.

31 These events in Germany took place before the battle of Cremona, the result of which was announced in a dispatch from Antonius Primus, supplemented by a proclamation by Caecina. Alpinus Montanus also, Prefect of one of the defeated cohorts, testified in person to the downfall of the party.¹ The news was variously received. The Gallic auxiliaries, who were indifferent to both sides alike, and had no interest in the service, followed at once the advice of their commanders, and abandoned the cause of Vitellius.² The older soldiers hesitated; nevertheless, when Hordeonius dictated to them the oath, they repeated it, under pressure from the Tribunes, though with little decision either on their faces or in their hearts, pronouncing most

The news of the battle of Cremona is variously received.

¹ All that we know of the dates of the above occurrences in Germany is given in this passage—that they must have occurred before the end of October, and therefore before any serious reverse to the Vitellian cause. After Cremona, it became evident that a desperate duel for mastery was to take place between the two imperial claimants; and that until it was fought out not a man, not a thought, could be spared by either side for events in Germany. The news now received doubled the hopes of the insurgents and their leaders. They now had a clear field, without fear of any interference from Rome. The attenuated army that remained had no longer an Emperor to fight for; they had lost, or were likely to lose, the one Emperor who had their sympathies, and in whose cause their brethren of the German army were fighting. The leaders naturally felt that now, if ever, they had a chance of achieving independence.

It is remarkable that Tac. should have made no earlier mention of the German revolt. It must have caused much anxiety at headquarters; and up

to the last moment before the battle of Cremona, the Vitellians had been expecting, the Flavians had been fearing, the arrival of fresh German reinforcements. But it is part of Tac.'s literary art—especially in the *Histories*—to tell a story as a whole, and not in fragments.

² The news of the defeat of the Vitellians gave a new turn to the war, and shook the fidelity even of the legions. Vitellius was the chosen of the German armies; and all the loyalty to Rome still remaining was centred in his person. In Italy, the fight had been first between the German armies and the Praetorians; it was now between the German armies and the armies of the East, unknown to Germans. Little wonder that the troops, all of whom, legions as well as auxiliaries, were recruited in Germany, were averse to swearing allegiance to Vespasian. The oath was administered at Novesium, where Hordeonius made his headquarters from this time till the moment of his murder by his own men (chap. 36).

of the words well enough, but hesitating or mumbling when they came to the name of Vespasian, or more often passing it by altogether.

Dispatches
of Antonius
to
Civilis :

The dispatches of Antonius to Civilis were then 32
read in public. Written as if to an adherent of Vespasian, and in a tone of hostility to the German army, they were ill received by the soldiers. When reported to the camp at Gelduba, the news evoked similar comments and manifestations, and Montanus was dispatched to Civilis with a message bidding him desist from hostilities, and *not to conceal under false pretences a design against the Empire. If his object had been to assist Vespasian, he had done enough for that purpose.*

Civilis wins
over the
messenger
Montanus.

To this Civilis at first returned an evasive reply ; but when he saw that Montanus was a man of mettle, ready to lend himself to new designs, he proceeded to vent his grievances, and talk of all the perils which he had gone through during his twenty-five years of service in the Roman army:—

'A pretty reward have I received for all my exertions ! a brother¹ killed—myself thrown into chains—this army of theirs cruelly clamouring for my death. For these things, by the law of nations, I call for vengeance. As for you Treveri, and other servile souls, what reward do you expect for the blood you have so often shed but a thankless service ? what but tribute without end, and submission to the rods, the axes, and the caprices of your masters ? See how I,' he continued, *'in command of a single cohort, with the Canninefates and the Batavians—a mere fraction of the Gallic people—have destroyed those vast and useless camps of theirs, and am pressing them hard*

¹ It is inferred from this passage that Julius Paulus, whose death is mentioned

in chap. 13, was a brother of Civilis.

with famine and with sword. If we make the venture now, we shall either achieve our liberty, or, if conquered, be no worse off than we were before.'

Montanus was fired by these words; but he was dismissed with orders to take back a smooth answer. On his return, he pretended to have failed in his mission; as to the other matters, which soon came to light, he held his peace.

33 Retaining part of his forces with himself, Civilis sent off his veteran cohorts, with the best of the Germans, against Vocula and his army, under the command of Julius Maximus and Claudius Victor, his sister's son.¹ On their way, they plundered the winter-quarters of some auxiliary horse at Asciburgium,² and then fell upon Vocula's camp so unexpectedly that he had no time either to address his men or to draw them out in line. All he could do in the confusion was to order his regular troops to present a strong centre; the auxiliaries, in no order, were on the flanks. Our cavalry charged; but being met by the well-ordered ranks of the enemy, they turned tail and fled into their own lines. What followed was not a battle but a slaughter. The Nervian cohorts, whether in terror or from treachery, left our flanks exposed; the attack thus fell upon the Legions, which after losing their standards were being forced back into their entrenchments, when an unlooked-for succour changed the fortune of the day.

The Germans attack Vocula at Gelduba;

Some Vascon³ cohorts which had been raised by

he is saved from defeat

¹ Full of confidence, and impatient at the resistance offered by the garrison of Vetera, Civilis boldly marches to attack Vocula's army at Gelduba, leaving a sufficient force before Vetera to contain it.

² Now Asberg, between Vetera and Gelduba.

³ The Vascones were Basques; that corps had been raised by Galba when governor in Spain.

by the
arrival of
some
Vascon
cohorts.

Galba, and had now been called up, were approaching the camp, when they heard the din of battle. Falling upon the enemy in the rear, when his attention was otherwise engaged, they created a panic out of all proportion to their numbers, some believing that the whole Roman army¹ had come up, either from Novaesium or from Mogontiacum. This mistake gave fresh heart to the Romans: trusting to a strength which was not theirs, they recovered their own.² The bravest of the Batavian foot were cut to pieces; their horse escaped with the standards and the prisoners taken in the first part of the battle. The number of slain upon our side that day was the greater, but of inferior troops; the Germans lost of their very best.

The Generals on both sides were at fault.

Both Generals had equally deserved defeat; both 34 failed to take advantage of success. If Civilis had put a larger force in the field, he could never have been surrounded by so small a number of cohorts; he would have carried the camp and destroyed it. Vocula had omitted to scout for the enemy's approach, and was defeated as soon as he came out of his camp. Afterwards, again, instead of turning his victory to account, he wasted several days before advancing against the enemy; whereas if he had followed up his advantage at once, and kept pressing the enemy, he might without more ado have raised the siege of the Legions.³

Vocula marches,

Meanwhile Civilis had tried to impress the besieged

¹ *I.e.* the whole force from Mogontiacum, including the portion which had arrived with Hordeonius at Novaesium.

² Rather a forced antithesis, more clear in the Latin from the double meaning of the word *vires*.

³ Tacitus is severely handled by

Henderson for daring, in his ignorance of strategy, to throw suspicion on the possible motives of Vocula as suggested in chap. 34—'the suspicion is a veritable masterpiece of improbability, product of ignorance and malignity combined.' This strong language seems scarcely justified.

with the idea that he had been victorious, and that the Roman cause was lost; the captured standards¹ were carried round the walls, and the captives exposed to view. One of these did a noble thing: he shouted out at the top of his voice what had really happened. The man was at once cut down by the Germans; but his story was believed all the more, while at the same time flames arising from the plundered and burning farm-houses proclaimed the approach of a victorious army. Vocula ordered the standards to be pitched within sight of the camp, protected by a ditch and rampart, and made the men lay down the heavy baggage and their kits, so as to fight free of all encumbrance. The men then clamoured against the General, demanding to be led to battle; for they had become accustomed to use threats. Disordered and fatigued as they were, without time even to form into line, they rushed to the fight; for Civilis was close upon them, being one who could make as much use of an enemy's mistakes as of the valour of his own men.²

though too tardily, to succour Vetera.

After an engagement outside the walls,

Various were the fortunes of the day on the Roman side. The most mutinous of the men proved cowards; others, remembering their recent victory, held their ground and struck out boldly at the foe, encouraging themselves and those near them. The battle thus restored, they stretched out their hands to the besieged, imploring them not to lose their chance: the besieged, who could see everything from the walls, sallied out from all the gates.

At this point the horse of Civilis happened to fall and throw him; a rumour spread throughout both

Vocula enters the camp.

¹ See n. on chap. 15.

² Here again, as in ii. 34, Tac. makes the good point that one of the greatest gifts of a great general is the capacity

to take advantage of the mistakes of an enemy—even when he may have made equal or greater mistakes of his own.

armies that he had been slain or wounded, creating a panic among his own men, and causing unbounded delight to ours. Yet Vocula made no attempt to pursue the fleeing enemy; and as if in expectation of another siege, proceeded to add to the height of the ramparts and towers of the camp. Having thus so often thrown away his chances of victory, he justly incurred the suspicion of not wishing to end the war.

Attacks upon parties sent out to get supplies of corn.

What our armies suffered from most was scarcity 35 of food. The baggage of the Legions was sent off to Novaesium with a crowd of non-combatants who were to fetch corn from that place by land—the river being now in possession of the enemy.¹ The first detachment made its way in safety, Civilis not having yet recovered² from his fall; but when he heard that a second party had been sent to Novaesium for corn, and that their escort were marching as in a time of profound peace—the men leaving their standards and wandering about at pleasure, while their arms were carried in waggons³—he attacked them in battle order, having sent on men ahead to secure the bridges and the narrow parts of the road in front. A straggling fight ensued, with no definite result, until night put an end to it; the cohorts made their way to Gelduba, where the camp was in the

¹ It would seem that it had been Vocula's first intention to remain with his whole force at Vetera, prepared to stand a siege, and await reinforcements, if any should come, from the south. But he was straitened for provisions; and he at once sent off a convoy to Novaesium for supplies, sending with it the heavy baggage and non-combatants. This body got through by land, and returned in safety; but when a second similar convoy was sent out insufficiently guarded, it met with the

difficulties related in this chapter.

² The words *non satis firmo Civile* might also mean 'Civilis not having got his forces together' after his recent defeat.

³ These words recall the circumstances of the disaster at Bronkhorst Spruit in the Transvaal which befell one of our regiments in Dec. 1880. The men were marching, *velut multa pace*, their rifles being carried on waggons behind them, when they were attacked by the Boers and cut to pieces.

same condition as before, being held by the soldiers who had been left there for its protection.¹

How perilous would be the return of the convoy in its demoralised condition, and laden with corn, was evident. Vocula added to his army a thousand picked men from the 5th and 15th Legions, which had been besieged at Vetera—men of turbulent temper and ill-affected towards their leaders. Turning out in greater number than had been ordered, these men openly protested on the march that they would endure famine and the treachery of their Legates no longer; while those left behind complained that to withdraw a part of the legionary force was to leave them to their fate. Thus Vocula was confronted by a double mutiny—one party calling on him to come back to the camp, the other refusing to return.

36 Meanwhile Civilis besieged Vetera, while Vocula retired to Gelduba and thence to Novaesium.² [Having captured Gelduba], Civilis soon afterwards fought a successful cavalry engagement near Novaesium. But victory and defeat alike did but kindle in our men a desire to slay their Generals; and when the number of the legionaries was increased by the arrival of the men of the 5th and 15th Legions,³ they made a demand

Insubordination
of the
legions;

¹ Henderson is certainly right in supposing that the convoy was attacked on its way out, the men's arms, etc. being on the waggons which were to bring the corn, and not, as Mommsen supposes, on their way back when laden. The force fought its way through as far as Gelduba, more than half-way to Novaesium, where it remained. Vocula adds a thousand men from Vetera to strengthen the convoy; but it is not clear from the narrative at what moment this addition was made, or where Vocula was at the time.

² These words seem to show that Vocula was with the force that marched out from Vetera; for the convoy had made its way to Gelduba already

(chap. 35). Vocula arrives at Gelduba, evacuates it with his combined force, and marches to Novaesium; no sooner is Gelduba evacuated than it is captured by Civilis.

³ The soldiers of the upper army (the 4th and 22nd legions), which had been stationed at Mogontiacum, retained, it would seem, more loyalty than the rest. This was probably due to the influence of Vocula, who was legate of the 22nd. Once again the insurgent corps attach themselves to the cause of Vitellius, though he was already dead. As Vitellius died in the last days of December, this brings us to the beginning of the year A.D. 70.

for a donative—having ascertained that a sum of money had been received from Vitellius. This demand, after a short hesitation, Hordeonius¹ granted in the name of Vespasian; but this only added fuel to the spirit of insubordination. The men abandoned themselves to debauchery, feasting, and nocturnal revelry; and reviving their old grudge against Hordeonius, they dragged him out of his bed and murdered him. Not one of the Legates or Tribunes interfered on his behalf; the darkness removed all sense of shame; and Vocula would have met the same fate himself had he not escaped unrecognised under cover of the night in the dress of a slave.

Hordeonius is murdered.

Disorderly conduct of the troops.

As the men's fury subsided, their fears returned, and they sent Centurions with letters to the Gallic States asking for help and pay; but when Civilis approached, with the precipitancy, the cowardliness, and the imbecility of a mob that has no ruler, they hurriedly took up arms, and no less quickly threw them down again and fled. Disaster breeding discord, the men of the Upper Army separated their cause from that of the others; nevertheless the images of Vitellius were set up again in the camps and in the neighbouring Belgian States, though by this time Vitellius had fallen.

37

Vocula marches to Mogontiacum.

After that, the men of the 1st, 4th, and 22nd Legions repented and returned to Vocula, who having once more administered the oath of allegiance to Vespasian, marched them off to raise the siege of Mogontiacum.² But by this time the besieging army,

¹ At Novaesium Vocula found Hordeonius waiting and inactive. The indignation of the troops against Hordeonius, which had been with difficulty kept in check when his troops were marching southwards (chap. 24), broke out with double violence on the arrival

of the contingents of the two legions (5th and 15th) which had been besieged in Vetera, the men putting upon his shoulders the blame for all their losses and privations.

² We here learn for the first time that after the legions had marched

which consisted of a motley crowd of Chatti, Usipi, and Mattiaci, being glutted with spoils, had departed, though not without severe loss, as our men had attacked them on the march when scattered and unprepared. Moreover, the Treveri had constructed a palisade and breastwork along their boundary, and were fighting the Germans with heavy losses to themselves as well as to the enemy; though they soon afterwards tarnished their great services to the Roman people by turning rebels against them.

38 Meanwhile Vespasian and Titus had assumed the Consulship, the former for the second time.¹ The city was in gloom, a prey to manifold doubts and terrors; for in addition to all present troubles, a false report was rife that Africa had revolted at the instigation of Lucius Piso,² [Proconsul] of that Province. Now Piso was by no means a man of turbulent temper; but it happened that the corn ships, by reason of bad weather, were unable to get into port; hence the populace, who buy their food from day to day, and whose sole public interest is in the supply of corn, believing what they feared, imagined that the coast was under blockade and that supplies were being held up. The Vitellians, still keen for their cause, magnified the report, and even the victorious party were not displeased by it; for their cupidities were such

Affairs in Rome. False report that Africa is in revolt.

north from Mogontiacum, that city had been attacked by a combination of German tribes from the right bank. Thus were enemies closing in on every side upon the slender Roman forces. The Gallic tribes, so long wavering, now openly joined in the revolt; and it became evident that, if no reinforcements arrived, the Roman cause was doomed. The Treveri and the Ubii almost alone remained faithful for the moment; but they too before long were

swept into the movement of revolt.

¹ We now go back for the next sixteen chapters (38-53) to the events which took place in Rome after the death of Vitellius and the final discomfiture of the Vitellian party, beginning with Jan. 1, A.D. 70.

² A harmless person of distinguished family; either his father or himself had been consul in A.D. 57. How he was tricked and murdered is told in chaps. 48-50.

as no foreign war could satisfy, no triumphs of civil conflict satiate.

Various arrangements made by the Senate and Mucianus.

On the 1st of January the Senate was convened by the City Praetor, Julius Frontinus,¹ when votes of compliments and thanks were passed to the Legates, the armies, and the allied princes. Tettius Julianus² was removed from the Praetorship in order that Plotius Grypus might be put in his place: the reason alleged being that he had deserted his Legion at the moment when it was passing over to Vespasian. The equestrian dignity was bestowed upon Hormus³; and not long afterwards, when Frontinus vacated⁴ his Praetorship, that office was bestowed upon Domitian. Domitian's name was put at the head of all edicts and dispatches; but the real power was in the hands of Mucianus, except so far as Domitian ventured to do things on the prompting of his friends, or from some caprice of his own.

Mucianus afraid of Antonius;

The men of whom Mucianus was most afraid were Antonius Primus and Arrius Varus,⁵ who, besides the fame of their recent doings, and their popularity with the army, were also in favour with the people because they had committed no cruelties save on

¹ In the absence of the two consuls (Vespasian and Titus) the Senate would be convened by the praetor urbanus. This was the celebrated Roman writer Sextus Julius Frontinus, who had a distinguished career as statesman as well as author. He filled the consulship three times; was governor of Britain from A.D. 75 to 78, when he was succeeded by Agricola; and was appointed *curator aquarum* in A.D. 97. It was thus that he acquired the knowledge to write his important work on the Aqueducts of Rome, in two books. He also wrote three books of *Strategemata*, a treatise on the art of war.

² How Tettius Julianus, legate of the 7th legion in Moesia, escaped the murder plotted against him by his chief Aponius Saturninus, and fled ultimately

to Vespasian, is told in ii. 85.

³ For this person, see iii. 12 and 28, and nn.

⁴ Lit. 'swearing himself out of office.' An outgoing magistrate had to swear that he had done nothing illegal during his tenure of office. It was in connexion with this oath, on the last day of the year B.C. 63, that the first attack was made upon Cicero by Metellus Nepos for his treatment of the Catilinarian conspirators during his consulship of that year.

⁵ For the character of Arrius Varus, the energetic lieutenant of Antonius during the late war, see iii. 6. He had recently been appointed to the command of the Praetorians (iv. 2), and presented with the insignia of the praetorship (chap. 4).

the field of battle. It was reported also that Antonius had urged Scribonianus Crassus¹ to seize upon power—a man of distinguished ancestry, and illustrious also from the reflection of his brother's reputation. And he would have found no lack of supporters had he not declined the offer, being one not readily to be allured by an assured prospect, much less by one of uncertainty and danger.

Now Antonius could not openly be crushed; Mucianus therefore showered praises on him in the Senate, and piled promises on him in private, holding out the prospect of Hither Spain, then vacant by the departure of Cluvius Rufus,² and at the same time lavishing Tribuneships and Prefectures upon his friends. Having thus fed his vanity with ambitious hopes, he destroyed his power by sending off the 7th Legion,³ which was entirely devoted to Antonius, into winter-quarters. The 3rd Legion, which had long served with Arrius Varus, was sent back to Syria; and part of the army was already on its way to Germany.⁴

he feeds his vanity and destroys his power.

All elements of disturbance having thus been removed, the city recovered its normal aspect, the laws and the magistrates their authority.

40 On the day when Domitian took his seat in the Senate, he made a short and modest speech about the absence of his father and his brother, and his own youth. He bore himself well; and as his character

Modest speech by Domitian.

¹ This was an elder brother of Piso, the adopted son of Galba. In the course of his speech adopting Piso, Galba thus alludes to this brother: *Est tibi frater pari nobilitate, natu maior, dignus hac fortuna nisi tu potior esses* (i. 15). He performed the last offices to his murdered brother (i. 47).

² As Cluvius was at this time ruling his province in absence (ii. 65), his tenure of office could be brought to an

end at any moment.

³ The 7th legion (*Galbiana*) had been under the command of Antonius in Pannonia; the 3rd (*Gallica*) apparently under Arrius. It had been brought from Syria for the special needs of Moesia, and was now sent back thither.

⁴ This is the first mention of any action being taken to meet the revolt of Civilis.

was as yet unknown, the frequent blush upon his cheek passed for a sign of bashfulness. On his proposing that Galba's honours should be restored, Curtius Montanus¹ moved that like respect should be paid to Piso. Both votes were passed; but in Piso's case no action was taken.

Appoint-
ment of
Commis-
sioners.

Commissioners were then appointed by lot for the following purposes: to make restitution of property plundered during the war; to examine and restore any brazen tablets inscribed with laws which had fallen into disrepair through age; to expunge from the calendar disgraceful entries due to the sycophancy of the times;² and to place some limit on the public expenditure.

Tettius Julianus had his Praetorship restored³ to him when it was discovered that he had taken refuge with Vespasian; but Grypus was not removed from office.

Publius
Celer con-
demned.

It was then resolved that the case between Musonius Rufus and Publius Celer⁴ should be further heard: Celer was condemned, and satisfaction was thus given to the shade of Soranus. Nor did a day so marked by an act of public justice fail to bring honour to individuals also; for Musonius was held to have done well in bringing the case to trial. Very different was the view taken of the Cynic philosopher Demetrius,⁵

¹ This Montanus was accused by Epirus Marcellus along with Thræsea, his crime being that of writing *detestanda carmina*, probably libels on Nero (Ann. xvi. 28); but he was defended as being *probæ iuventæ neque famosi carminis* (ib. chap. 29). He was forgiven by Nero, but forbidden public life; as belonging to the liberal opposition party, it would be natural for him to move in Piso's honour.

² Various adulatory votes complimentary to the reigning Emperor were often entered in the Fasti: thus after

the suppression of Piso's conspiracy it was voted that the month of April should henceforth be named after Nero (Ann. xv. 74); while May was to be called Claudius and June Germanicus (Ann. xvi. 12). Tac. considers that the Fasti were *foedati*—disfigured—by having such signs of adulation entered in them. Some comm. have strangely missed the meaning.

³ See n. on preceding chap.

⁴ For the beginning of the quarrel see chap. 10.

⁵ It seemed specially unbecoming

who from interested and dishonourable motives had defended a manifestly guilty person. Celer himself displayed neither spirit nor eloquence in his defence.

The signal for taking vengeance on informers having thus been given, Junius Mauricus asked Domitian to afford the Senate access to the Imperial commentaries, that it might be discovered at whose instance different persons had been denounced.¹ Domitian replied that in a matter of such importance the Emperor must be consulted.

41 At the suggestion of its leading members, the Senate devised a form of oath whereby, with much eagerness, all the magistrates, and the other Senators in their turn, called the Gods to witness that they had put no man's life in danger, and had received neither honour nor reward from the ruin of any Roman citizen. Those whose guilty consciences troubled them used various devices to alter the words of the oath. In each case the Fathers either approved the oath as taken, or denounced it as a perjury²—a form of censure which was pronounced with special

Form of oath devised to make accusers convict themselves.

that a Cynic philosopher who had been in Thræsea's company during his last hours, discoursing on the immortality of the soul and the separation of the mind from the body (Ann. xvi. 34), should have come forward to defend a delator.

¹ The senators of the independent school took every opportunity of getting their oar in during the first days of the reign, while the policy of the new Emperor was still in the forming. It would seem to us an intolerable liberty to ask for access to a sovereign's private diaries or commentaries. These 'commentaries' were probably notes or minutes on public events. In Ann. xiii. 43 we find that when the delator Suillius defended himself on the ground that his accusations had been ordered by Claudius, Nero 'stopped this line of excuse by asserting that he had ascertained from his father's papers that that

Emperor had never insisted on a single prosecution.' Junius Mauricus is thus described by Pliny:—*quo viro nihil firmius, nihil verius*. He belonged to a bold family. He was himself banished by Domitian; and his brother Arulenus Rusticus (the praetor-envoy so ill-treated by the Flavians, iii. 80) was put to death by Domitian for singing the praises of Thræsea (Agric. 45; Suet. Dom. 10).

² The commentators differ in their interpretation of this phrase, which is ambiguous only by its brevity—*Probabant religionem patres, periurium arguebant*. The meaning is that in each case the senators signified their approval or disapproval, according as they thought the oath had been truly or falsely taken. In extreme cases, like that of Vocula, they actually hustled out of the Senate-house those whom they pronounced to have perjured themselves.

severity upon Sariolenus Vocula, Nonius Attianus, and Cestius Severus,¹ who had been notorious accusers under Nero. Sariolenus was also accused of more recent practices under Vitellius; and he was compelled at last, by threats of actual violence, to leave the Senate-house.

The Senators next turned upon Paccius Africanus, and drove him out also, because he had denounced to Nero, and so destroyed, the two Scribonii—brothers famed alike for their wealth and for their mutual affection. Africanus neither dared to deny his guilt, nor had the courage to confess it; turning instead upon Vibius Crispus,² who was pressing him with questions, he confused the issue which he was unable to meet, and by implicating another in his offence shifted the odium from himself.

On that day Vipstanus Messala,³ a young man 42 who had not yet reached senatorial age,⁴ won a great name both for brotherly affection and for eloquence by daring to plead on behalf of his brother Aquilius Regulus.⁵ Regulus had incurred much odium, when a mere youth, by bringing about the ruin of two families, that of the Crassi⁶ and that

Vipstanus
Messala
boldly de-
fends his
brother
Regulus.

¹ These are unknown persons.

² Described in ii. 10 as *pecunia potentia ingenio inter claros magis quam inter bonos*. In chap. 43, 10, he is described as *renidens*, which corresponds with Juvenal's mention of him, *venit et Crispi iucunda senectus = Cuius erant mores qualis facundia, mite = Ingenium* (iv. 81-83). See n. on ii. 10.

³ This is the soldier-historian who brought over the 7th legion (*Claudiana*) to the Flavian side at the critical moment, and is described by Tac. as 'the only honest man produced by the war' (iii. 9). He must have been no mean orator, as he is introduced in the Dialogue as the champion and representative of the ancient style of oratory.

⁴ Fixed by Augustus at 25.

⁵ Pliny speaks of this man with the utmost contempt; he quotes with approval a description of him as *omnium bipedum nequissimus* (Epp. i. 5). Martial praises him; which perhaps is not to be wondered at after his flatteries of Domitian.

⁶ The person chiefly alluded to is M. Licinius Crassus Frugi, consul in A.D. 64 (Ann. xv. 33), elder brother of the Piso adopted by Galba, whose death under Nero was brought about by Regulus, probably on a charge of treason. He was also brother of the Scribonianus Crassus mentioned above in chap. 39. For so great a family as the Crassi, it was hard to escape the suspicion of ambitious aims; and under Nero, to be suspected of them was death.

of Orfitus.¹ These prosecutions he was thought to have undertaken of his own motion;² not to save himself from danger, but with a view to acquiring importance. Sulpicia Praetextata, the wife of Crassus, and her four children, were ready to press for vengeance should the Senate take up the matter. Messala said nothing about the merits of the case, nor yet in defence of the accused; but he impressed some of the Senators by an appeal for mercy on his brother's behalf.

This appeal was met by a savage rejoinder from Curtius Montanus, who went so far as to accuse Regulus of having given money after Galba's death to the murderer of Piso, and of having bitten Piso's head³ :—

Fierce rejoinder by Curtius Montanus.

'That act at least,' he continued, 'Nero did not compel you to do; it was not to save your position or your life that you committed that barbarity. We may tolerate excuses for a man who has chosen to destroy others rather than endanger himself. But your safety was secured⁴; your father was in exile; his property had been divided amongst his creditors; you yourself were not of age for public office; you had nothing that Nero could covet, nothing that he could fear. It was the lust for slaying, the greed for gain, that made you imbrue your novice hand, untried in any man's defence, in the shedding

¹ Servius Cornelius Orfitus was consul in A.D. 51 along with Claudius. We know nothing of his case; he is mentioned as furthering a flattery to Nero in Ann. xvi. 12.

² The reading of M here is *E XSC*, supposed to stand for *ex senatus consulto*; but as this is contradictory to *sonte*, we may take the reading to be a gloss. Müller substitutes *Caesaris*.

³ As Regulus had caused the death of Piso's brother, the law of anticipated revenge would make Regulus hate Piso

also.

⁴ The 'safety' of Regulus and his brother consisted in the fact that as his father was in exile, the family property confiscated, and Regulus himself under age, Nero could have no reason to be afraid of, and therefore persecute, the family. The argument then is that as Regulus had no special occasion to propitiate Nero, he must have taken to delation out of sheer lust of blood and greed of money.

of noble blood; that helped you to snatch the Consular spoils out of the disasters of your country, to batten upon seven million sesterces, and all resplendent in your priesthood, to overwhelm innocent children, distinguished old men, and illustrious women, in one common ruin: during all which time you were denouncing Nero as a sluggard for troubling himself and the accusers to attack single families, when he might, by one word, have destroyed the entire Senate.¹

'Retain, Conscript Fathers, and preserve a man so ready of resource, that every age may be provided with examples, and that our young men may look to Regulus as their pattern, just as our old men look to Marcellus² and to Crispus. Villainy finds imitators even when it fails; what if it were to grow fat and flourish? If we dare not give umbrage to this youth of Quaestorian rank, how shall we so dare when he becomes a Praetorian or a Consular? Do you suppose that Nero is to be the last of our masters? So thought the men who survived Tiberius and Gaius; but after them came a tyrant more accursed and more cruel still. We have no fear of Vespasian: his age, his moderation, are our sureties: but an evil example has a more lasting effect than a good character.³ We are emasculate, Conscript Fathers; we are

¹ Cp. the truculent saying attributed to Caligula when enraged with the people: *Utinam populus Romanus unam cervicem haberet* (Suet. Cal. 30).

² Marcellus, of course, is the informer Epirus Marcellus, of whom we have heard so much; Crispus is Vibius Crispus, on whom see nn. on chap. 47 and ii. 10.

³ The remarkable phrase *diutius durant exempla quam mores* is ambiguous. *Exemplum* itself is a neutral word, which may be taken either in a good or bad sense; a pattern to follow, or a pattern to avoid. If the words be taken along with the preceding sentence, an interpretation may be suggested which I have not seen in any com-

mentary. Montanus is warning the Senate not to suppose that they have seen the last or the worst of bad Emperors; 'So thought our fathers; but after a Tiberius came a Gaius, after Gaius came a Nero. Vespasian, no doubt, is an excellent person, but examples (*i.e.* examples of evil) are more enduring — are more likely to be copied—than lives of virtue; the Neros are more likely to find imitators than the Vespasians.' This gives excellent sense. If, however, we put a full stop at *moderatio*, and take the next phrase in connexion with the concluding paragraph which calls hotly for punishment, the word *exemplum* will be used in its frequent sense of

no longer the same Senate that, when Nero fell, clamoured for the death, in ancient fashion,¹ of his informers and his minions : after an evil Emperor, the first day is the best day.'²

43 The Senate listened to Montanus with such approval, that Helvidius conceived the hope that even Eprius Marcellus³ might be overthrown. So beginning with a panegyric upon Cluvius Rufus,⁴ who, though not less wealthy, not less famed for eloquence than Marcellus, had put no man's life in peril in Nero's time, he pressed home both the charge and the example against the latter to the great delight of the Fathers. Perceiving which, Marcellus made as though he would leave the Senate-house, exclaiming, '*I am off, Priscus ; I leave you your Senate ; do you play the king in it before the eyes of Caesar !*'.⁵

Helvidius
attacks
Eprius
Marcellus.

He was followed by Vibius Crispus. Both men were angered, but they had different expressions on their faces : wrath flashed out of the eyes of Marcellus,⁶ while Crispus wore a placid smile.⁷ Both were at last pulled back by their friends. But the contest grew hotter and hotter, the right-minded majority on the one side, a few filled with rancorous hatred on the other ; and the whole day was spent in wrangling.⁸

Noisy
scene in
the Senate.

exemplary punishment ; and the meaning will be, 'A smart sentence will have a more lasting effect than the memory of Vespasian's virtues.'

¹ *I.e.* by scourging first and decapitation afterwards : *ut verberibus exanimatum corpus securi feriretur* (Hirt. viii. 38).

² *I.e.* the best day for punishment. After the death of a bad Emperor, the sooner you avenge yourselves on his minions the better.

³ Tac. gives the name as 'Marcellus' only, without prefixing 'Eprius ;' and then three lines below, according to his frequent custom, he has 'Eprius' alone, without the 'Marcellus.' This is somewhat confusing to the English reader ; but as a rule I have preferred to leave

the names as Tac. wrote them.

⁴ For Cluvius Rufus see i. 8 and 76, ii. 58, iii. 65, and nn.

⁵ *I.e.* 'Dare to lord it over your Senate when Caesar is present.'

⁶ The bullying Old Bailey tone of the oratory of Eprius is described in Ann. xvi. 29 : *Cum Marcellus, ut erat torvus ac minax, voce vultu oculis ardesceret.* See n. on ii. 10.

⁷ See n. on chap. 41.

⁸ Tac. delights in recording these stormy scenes in the Senate, occurring as they did during a kind of interregnum. They recalled the old days of freedom when there was no Emperor to stifle debate by methods corresponding to those of the gag or guillotine.

Domitian and Mucianus deprecate the revival of old rancours.

The next meeting of the Senate was opened by Domitian with a speech recommending that the old sores and inevitable rancours of former times should be forgotten. Mucianus spoke at great length in defence of the accusers; but at the same time, in gentle and almost deprecatory language, he censured the practice of reviving prosecutions which had been begun and then abandoned. In face of this opposition, the Fathers gave up their attempt at freedom; and Mucianus, not wishing to be thought to disregard the judgments of the Senate, or to be granting impunity to all enormities committed in Nero's reign, sent back to their islands two Senators who had returned from exile — Octavius Sagitta¹ and Antistius Sosianus. Octavius had debauched Pontia Postumina, and then murdered her, in a fit of amatory passion, because she refused to marry him; Sosianus was a vile character who had brought many men to ruin. Both had been severely condemned by the Senate and banished; and though other exiles were now allowed to return, the punishment of these two men was not remitted. This, however, in no way mitigated the feeling against Mucianus. Sosianus and Sagitta were persons of no importance, even if they returned; the accusers that men feared were those possessed of ability, wealth, and high influence put to evil uses.²

Two Senators sent back to exile.

Outrage at Sena Julia.

The feelings of the Fathers were mollified for a time by an inquiry held in the Senate after the ancient fashion. A Senator, Manlius Patruitus, complained

¹ The terrible and dramatic story of how Octavius Sagitta, then tribune of the plebs, murdered Pontia is told in the *Annals* (xiii. 44). Octavius was deported, and his property confiscated. L. Antistius was on the point of being condemned to death by the Senate for

composing libellous verses on Nero; Thrasea interceded for him, and obtained a commutation of the sentence to deportation (*Ann.* xiv. 48, 49).

² In this and other passages Tac. is fond of giving his own opinions as being the general sentiment of the time.

that he had been beaten by a mob set on by the magistrates in the Colony of Sena :¹—

Nor had the outrage stopped there, he said : a representation of his own funeral,² with wailings and lamentations, had been held before his eyes, while every kind of insult had been levelled against the Senate as a whole.

The persons accused were summoned, and after a hearing were condemned and punished ; and a decree was added enjoining the people of the town to behave themselves in future.

About the same time Antonius Flamma was found guilty of extortion and cruelty at the suit of the Cyrenaeans,³ and condemned to exile.

46 And now a mutiny all but broke out in the army. The Praetorians who had been disbanded by Vitellius,⁴ and had flocked to Vespasian's standard, demanded re-admission to the service ; and the legionaries who had been selected with the same prospect now clamoured for the pay promised to them. But even the Vitellians could not be got rid of without bloodshed ; and a great sum of money⁵ would be required to retain so large a number. Proceeding to the camp in order to inquire exactly into each man's length

Agitation among the disbanded Praetorians ;

Mucianus proceeds to the camp.

¹ No doubt the Colony of Sena Julia in Etruria, on the road from Clusium to Florence ; the modern *Siena*.

² A form of censure or insult not unknown in Ireland.

³ Most edd. insert *accusantibus* before *Cyrenensibus* to complete the sense ; but the word is not in *M*.

⁴ It will be remembered that Vitellius, afraid of the Praetorians, who had fought for Otho, made it his first care to disband and disarm them, *addito honestae missionis lenimento* (ii. 67). In their place, he had admitted legionaries among the Praetorians ; and the desire to enter that corps being so great, he had raised the number of Praetorian Cohorts to sixteen. The disbanded Praetorians had flocked round the Flavian standard ; and it

would seem from this passage that large numbers of Flavian legionaries had been promised admission into the Praetorian force, with its higher pay. Thus there were several sets of claimants to be provided for, including Vitellian legionaries—those originally promoted by Vitellius, and perhaps also some of the Vitellian legionaries who had surrendered at Narnia (iii. 63) and Bovillae (iv. 2).

⁵ There is a disarrangement in *M* at this point. After the words *immensa pecunia* in line 5 of this chapter is inserted, by mistake, the passage beginning with the words *ferunt ne criminantium* in chap. 52, line 2, down to *defuisse crede* in the last line of chap. 53. See *F*'s note.

of service, Mucianus drew up the troops of the conquering army in separate divisions, and at moderate intervals, all with their proper arms and decorations. Then the Vitellians who had surrendered at Bovillae, as I have stated above, were brought out, together with others who had been hunted up through the city and neighbourhood—men who had scarcely clothes upon their backs.¹ These men Mucianus ordered to be separated from the rest, placing the Germans also, and the Britons, and men of other armies, in different divisions.

Terror
of the
Vitellians ;

The mere sight of these arrangements stupefied the Vitellians. Confronting them they saw a fully-armed host, drawn up as if for battle, while they themselves, in their unclothed, unkempt condition, were being surrounded. And when they were marched off in different directions, a terror seized them all, and especially the Germans, that they were being thus marked out for slaughter. They clutched hold of their comrades by the breast, they hung on to their necks, praying for one last embrace, and imploring not to be abandoned, to undergo alone, in like case, an unlike fate. They appealed now to Mucianus, now to the absent Emperor, and lastly to the Gods above, till Mucianus stayed the false alarm by telling them they had all taken the same oath, and calling them all soldiers of the same Emperor; for even the conquering army aided with their shouts the tears of the conquered.²

ultimately
Domitian
grants

So ended matters on that day. But when Domitian addressed the men a few days afterwards, they

¹ Usually interpreted as by Spooner, 'without weapons or military cloak.' But these were men who had been cashiered, and had retired into civil life; they had to be 'hunted up' (*conquisiti*); and the words which follow (*inluvie deformes*) seem to show that

these men, dismissed the service, had been reduced to pitiable straits and were almost destitute.

² Once again Tac. tells us of the tears shed by Roman soldiers, almost as a matter of course. See i. 69 n. and iii. 31.

assumed a more resolute attitude, rejecting the offer of lands, and demanding military service and military pay. This professed to be a petition; but it was a petition that could not be refused, and they were all admitted into the Praetorian force. After that, those who had reached the prescribed age,¹ or had served their time, were honourably discharged. Others were discharged for misconduct; but this was done sporadically, or to one at a time, which is the safest method of whittling away the united demands of a multitude.

them re-
admission.

47 To meet the real or supposed deficiency in the Exchequer, it was proposed in the Senate to raise a sum of sixty million sesterces on loan from private persons; and Pompeius Silvanus was appointed to take charge of the matter. But the necessity, or rather the pretence of the necessity, soon passed away.

Measures
passed by
the Senate.

After that, on the motion of Domitian, a law was passed annulling the Consulships conferred by Vitellius,² while Flavius Sabinus was honoured with a Censorian funeral;³ two conspicuous examples of the instability of Fortune, and of how she mingles together the highest and the lowest.⁴

48 Just about this time the Proconsul Lucius Piso⁵

Murder of
Lucius
Piso,

¹ During the Republic the military age was from 17 to 46; Praetorians were entitled to a discharge after 16 years, legionaries after 20 years' service. I can find no authority for Spooner's statement that under the Empire the age of retirement was at 50. For the pay of soldiers, see n. on Ann. i. 17.

² The reference is to the consulships promised by Vitellius in advance: *consules in multos annos destinabat* (iii. 55). These could now be only cancelled by a regular law.

³ The most gorgeous of all public funerals was that given to a censor; hence the highest kind of *funus publicum* was called a *funus censorium*. Besides the long procession of images

which followed the funeral of a Roman noble in such instances (see Ann. iii. 76), a censorian funeral might include funeral games, gladiatorial combats, banquets, distribution of food (*visceratio*), etc.

⁴ The phrase here used (*summaque et ima miscentis*) is a reminiscence of Hor. Od. i. 34, 12: *Valet ima summis = Mutare, et insignem attenuat deus*.

⁵ The Pisos were an illustrious but unfortunate family; continually tempted to aim at *res novae*, or suspected of doing so, and as liable to be made to suffer for the false suspicion as for the true. The pitiable story given in this chapter shows that no amount of loyalty, nor the most careful conduct, could keep the bearer of an illustrious

proconsul
of Africa.

was murdered. To explain the exact truth about this affair, I will go back and recount shortly, from the beginning, the causes which led up to so atrocious a crime.

During the reigns of the Divine Augustus and Tiberius, the Legion and the auxiliaries which guard the African frontier were under the command of the Proconsul; but Gaius, being of an unquiet temper, and afraid of Marcus Silanus,¹ the Governor, took away the Legion from the Proconsul, and handed it over to a Legate sent out for the purpose. The equal division of patronage, and the confusion of jurisdiction, became a source of discord, and of bitter and increasing rivalry between the two; but the Legate became the more important personage, either because of the permanence of his office, or because inferiors are naturally keener in their rivalry,² while the more eminent³ of the Proconsuls are more concerned to secure their own safety than to extend their authority.⁴

The ma-
chinations

Now at that time the Legion in Africa was under 49

name safe from the machinations of those whose interest it was to beget suspicion, and so gain the credit for stifling attempts which had never been meditated. This Piso's father and grandfather, as well as himself, were consulars. In chap. 38 we are told that the supposed rising of Piso was an invention of the mob, who suspected that he had artificially brought about a scarcity of corn.

¹ The Emperor Gaius had married Claudia, the daughter of this M. Silanus (Ann. vi. 20). Silanus is several times mentioned in the *Annals* as occupying a powerful position in the Senate, and Gaius seems to have been afraid of him.

² The meaning seems to be that when a superior and an inferior are in rivalry, the inferior is likely to be the more active and venomous in his emulation. The inferior will take more trouble to supplant his chief than the

superior to hold his own against him.

³ The words *proconsulum splendidissimus quisque* refer especially to the proconsuls of Africa and Asia, which were considered the most important of the senatorial provinces. The governors of those provinces, being the objects of greater suspicion, were the more anxious to keep things quiet and comfortable for themselves, and avoid any appearance of ambitious designs.

⁴ This chap. shows that the proconsuls in the senatorial provinces, however dignified their office, had gradually lost all real power in subordination to the *proconsulare imperium* of the Emperors. As a rule, they no longer even wore the military dress: but Africa had been an exception. In that province the proconsul had been allowed to command its single legion, until, as here recorded, Gaius transferred the command to his own legate.

the command of Valerius Festus,¹ an extravagant and ambitious youth, who felt uneasy because of his relationship to Vitellius. Whether, in his frequent interviews with Piso, he urged him to revolt, or opposed Piso's own suggestions in that direction, is uncertain, as their meetings were held in private; and after Piso's death most persons sought to ingratiate themselves with the murderer. That the Province and the army were hostile to Vespasian is beyond doubt; and there were Vitellian fugitives from Rome who represented to Piso that the Gallic Provinces were wavering; that Germany was ready to revolt; that he was himself in danger, and that, for a man suspected in time of peace, the safest policy was war.

of Valerius
Festus and
Claudius
Sagitta

At this moment Claudius Sagitta, Commander of the Petrian Horse,² making a good passage, arrived in Africa before Papirius, a Centurion who had been sent out by Mucianus. Sagitta asserted that Papirius had been instructed to put Piso to death; that Galerianus, Piso's cousin and son-in-law, had been slain³; and that Piso's only hope of safety for himself lay in vigorous action:—*There were two bold courses open to him, he said; he might take up arms at once, or else make for Gaul by sea, and offer himself as Emperor to the Vitellian armies.*

These suggestions made no impression upon Piso; but when the Centurion dispatched by Mucianus landed at Carthage, he kept on offering congratulations to Piso as though he were Emperor, and urged all who came in his way, taken aback as they

are vainly
resisted by
Piso.

¹ Valerius Festus had already shown himself an unstable personage. While openly supporting Vitellius, whose name was more popular in Africa than that of Vespasian, he had secretly intrigued for Vespasian (ii. 97 and 98). What his relationship to Vitellius was is not

known.

² For this body of irregular horse, see i. 70 and n.

³ For the death of this other member of the Piso family—known as Galerianus—see chap. xi. He was son of the Piso who conspired against Nero.

were and marvelling at this new thing, to join in the cry. The credulous mob, having no care for the truth, rushed to the Forum out of mere lust of flattery, and with tumultuous shouts of joy called on Piso to appear. Acting on Sagitta's information, or perhaps from natural modesty, Piso would neither come forward in public, nor lend himself to the desires of the multitude. On cross-questioning the Centurion, and discovering that the man had been seeking to trump up a capital charge against him, he ordered his execution; not so much in the hope of saving his own life, as in wrath against the murderer: for Papirius was one of the men who had slain Clodius Macer,¹ and he was now bringing hands already stained with a Legate's blood to accomplish the murder of a Proconsul.

Piso issued an edict sharply rebuking the people of Carthage; and then shutting himself up in his house, abandoned even his regular duties, lest some chance accident might give rise to a fresh disturbance.

When reports, half true and half false, of the public agitation and the execution of the Centurion came to the ears of Festus, exaggerated as is the way with rumours, he dispatched horsemen to slay Piso. Riding at full speed, they broke into Piso's house, with swords drawn, in the dusk of early dawn—the greater number not knowing Piso by sight, since the men chosen to perpetrate the deed were Carthaginian and Moorish auxiliaries. Not far from Piso's chamber they fell in with a slave, of whom they inquired what he was like, and where he was; the slave, uttering a noble falsehood, replied that he himself was Piso, and was at once cut down. Piso was killed soon

Festus has
Piso murdered,

50

¹ For the death of Clodius Macer, see i. 7.

afterwards; for there was a man there who knew him, one Baebius Massa,¹ a Procurator in that Province, who had already made himself a scourge to all good citizens, and whose name will frequently recur among the causes of the calamities which we had afterwards to endure.

Hurrying back to his Legion from Adrumetum,² where he had remained to watch the course of events, Festus ordered the arrest of Caetronius Pisanus, Prefect of the camp, for some quarrel of his own, pretending that he was a satellite of Piso's; some of the soldiers and Centurions he punished, some he rewarded, in neither case according to their deserts, but in order to gain credit for having stopped a war.

Soon afterwards he composed a quarrel between the Oeenses³ and the Lepcitani, which having had a small beginning in the plundering of corn and cattle, had come to be a matter of pitched battles; for the Oeenses, being inferior in numbers, had called to their aid the Garamantes, a hardy tribe who make a rich harvest by plundering their neighbours. Reduced thus to a low ebb, their territory devastated far and wide, the Lepcitani cowered behind their walls, till by the intervention of the auxiliary horse and foot the Garamantes were dispersed, and all the booty recovered, save what they had sold to outlying tribes in their wanderings through remote villages.

and hurries
back to his
legion.

Expedition
against the
Lepcitani.

¹ Baebius Massa made himself infamous as an informer under Domitian, and is taken as a type of the worst of that class both by Tac. and by Juvenal; Agricola, we are told, lived in comparatively happy days since *Massa Baebius iam tum reus erat* (Agric. 45); a delator comes by whom even Massa fears (*quem Massa timet*, Juv. i. 35). He was governor of Baetica, was accused of extortion by Pliny the younger and condemned: but by Domitian's favour

he soon recovered his position. See the interesting reference to Massa in Pliny's letter to Tacitus (vii. 33).

² To the S. of Carthage, on the coast.

³ Oea is the modern *Tripoli*. The Leptis here mentioned is Leptis Maior, to the extreme E. of the Tripoli country. The three towns, Oea, Leptis Maior, and Abrotonum (= Sabrata) were the three towns which made up the ancient Tripolis. F. reads *Lepcitani*. The Garamantes were a wild tribe to the S.

After
Cremona,
Vespasian
receives
congratu-
lations
from
various
quarters.

Offer of
cavalry
from
Vologeses.

To return to Vespasian. After the victory of 51
Cremona, when good news was coming in from every
quarter, various persons of every rank, crossing the
winter seas with equal boldness¹ and good fortune,
announced to him that Vitellius had fallen. Envoys
also arrived from King Vologeses offering him 40,000
Parthian cavalry. To be courted by the offer of such
a splendid force of allies, without having any need for
them, was a grand and gratifying thing; thanks were
returned to Vologeses, and he was enjoined to send
envoys to the Senate,² and satisfy himself that peace
had been secured.

Titus
appointed
for the
Judean
War.

Vespasian's thoughts were now bent on Italy
and the affairs of Rome; and as he was receiving
unfavourable reports of his son Domitian, who was
said to be overstepping the limits of his age, and of
what was permissible in a son, he handed over to
Titus the main strength of his army to bring to an
end what remained of the Judean War.³

He begs
Vespasian
not to be
affected by
unfavour-
able re-
ports of
Domitian.

Titus, they say, had a long conversation with his 52
father before they parted, begging⁴ him not to be too
readily angered by the reports of slanderers, but to
keep an open mind, and show himself placable to
his son:—

*It was not so much by Legions and by fleets, he said,
that an Emperor's power was secured, as by the number
of his family. Friendships cooled, changed, or came*

¹ The Romans were very timid about crossing the open Mediterranean in winter. We have seen that corn was kept back from Rome *saevitia hiemis* (chap. 38); and in chap. 52 it is mentioned as a sign of promptness in Vespasian that he loaded ships with corn *saevo adhuc mari*. The rising of the Pleiades in early May marked the beginning of the sailing season.

² This answer of Vespasian was doubtless an act of constitutional deference to the Senate, who though de-

prived of all real power over foreign affairs, had still the privilege of receiving envoys from foreign states.

³ The revolt of the Jews against Rome began under Nero; Vespasian had by this time overrun the entire country, and only Jerusalem held out.

⁴ At this point (*viz.* with the words *ferunt ne criminantium*) comes the beginning of the page or leaf in M which had been inserted after the words *pecunia immensa* in chap. 46, line 5. See n. there.

to an end, under the influence of time and fortune, or it might be of ambitions and misunderstandings: but no man could be parted from his own blood—least of all an Emperor, whose good fortunes were enjoyed by many, whose misfortunes touched only those nearest to him. Even brothers could not remain in amity unless an example were set them by their father.

More pleased with the brotherliness of Titus than softened towards Domitian, Vespasian bade his son be of good courage, and exalt his country by deeds of arms and war:—*He would himself take thought for peace and for his family.* He then committed to the still stormy seas his swiftest vessels, laden with corn; for the city was on the brink of famine, having no more than ten days' supply in the granaries when Vespasian's stores arrived.¹

53 The charge of rebuilding the Capitol was committed by Vespasian to Lucius Vestinus,² who, though only of equestrian rank, was one of the foremost men in the state for influence and reputation. Having called together the soothsayers, he was advised that the remains of the former shrine should be carried away to the marshes, and that the Temple should be rebuilt upon exactly the same site as before:—*The*

Rebuilding
of the
Capitol.

¹ So in Ann. xii. 43 (where see n.) it is stated that there was only fifteen days' supply of food in the city. The constant supply of corn for Rome was one of the greatest cares of the Roman Government, and a continual source of anxiety. Hence the importance of the officer called *praefectus annonae*. The mob had to be fed and amused to keep it quiet: cp. the famous passage in Juvenal, where he says that the Roman populace *duas tantum res anxius optat = Panem et Circenses* (Sat. x. 80-1).

² Lucius Vestinus is no doubt the same person as is mentioned by Claudius in his speech bestowing the *ius honorum* on certain Gauls in Gallia Comata:—*Ex qua colonia (i.e. Vienna) inter paucos equestri ordinis ornamentum,*

L. Vestinum, familiarissime diligo hodieque in rebus meis detineo. This seems to show that he was one of Claudius' procurators.

The unique description which follows of the laying of the foundation stone is interesting as showing how much of our own practice on similar occasions has come down to us from Rome. There seems no sufficient reason for inferring from this passage, as Spooner does, that Vespasian himself was absent from the ceremony of laying the foundation stone. Both Suet. (Vesp. 8) and Dio (lxvi. 10) assert that he was present.

It is to be noticed that in this and other passages, the word *Capitolium*, by itself, stands for the Temple, not for the Capitol as a whole.

Gods, they declared, would allow no change in its form.

The foundation stone is laid upon the 21st of June.

On the 21st of June, under a cloudless sky, the space to be devoted to the Temple was decked with wreaths and chaplets. A procession of soldiers with auspicious names bore branches of happy omen¹ in their hands; next, the Vestal Virgins, with a company of boys and maidens whose fathers and mothers were still living,² sprinkled the site with river or spring water. After that, the Praetor³ Helvidius Priscus, having purified the area with the sacrifice of a sow, a sheep, and a bull, and duly placed their entrails upon an altar of turf, prayed to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, and to the Gods who guard our Empire, imploring them in a form of words dictated by the Pontifex Plautius Aelianus, to prosper the work in hand, and to lend their divine aid in building up their own abode, now being founded for them by the piety of man. He then touched the fillets⁴ attached to the foundation-stone and to the ropes wound round it; whereupon the other Magistrates, the Priests, the Senators, the Knights, and a number of the citizens, pulling with hearty goodwill, dragged the huge stone along.

Pieces of gold and silver were then scattered among the foundations, together with bits of ore fresh from the mine, in its natural state, having never been

¹ The laurel, the myrtle, the olive, and the oak were considered specially fortunate or auspicious. The laurel was sacred to Apollo, the myrtle to Venus, the olive to Minerva, and the oak to Jupiter.

² *Patrimi et matrimi* were children whose parents were both alive (called by Dionysius ἀμφιθαλείς); and it is probable that, as for other old ceremonial purposes, the parents of such children must have been married according to the ancient rite of *confarreatio*.

³ Why the praetor should have officiated, if Vespasian was present, is not clear.

⁴ The *vittae* were probably fillets, ornamented with flowers and flocks of wool. These were put into the hands of the presiding officer to pull at the right moment. They would be connected with the massive cables round the stone itself, just as at the launch of a ship a slight cord or ribbon in the hand of the person who performs the ceremony sets loose the whole apparatus, and sends the ship upon her way.

melted in the furnace: for the soothsayers prescribed that the work should not be profaned by any stone or gold that had been destined for other purposes. The Temple was built higher than before: that being the only point deemed wanting in the former building, and the only one as to which religion would permit a change.¹

54 Meanwhile the news of the death of Vitellius, spreading throughout Gaul and Germany, had redoubled the war. For Civilis, dropping his mask, made open war against Rome, while the Vitellian Legions were ready to submit to a foreign master rather than accept Vespasian as Emperor. The Gauls took fresh courage, believing that our armies were everywhere meeting a like fate: for a rumour had got abroad that our winter-quarters in Moesia and Pannonia were being besieged by Sarmatians and Dacians. Like fictions were told about Britain also; but what most of all encouraged a belief that the Empire was coming to an end was the burning of the Capitol:—

News of the death of Vitellius aggravates the war in Gaul and Germany.

Once before, it was said, Rome had been captured by the Gauls; but the abode of Jupiter had been untouched, and her dominion had remained to her: whereas now a fateful fire had given a sign of the divine wrath, and portended the mastery of the world for the nations beyond the Alps.

Idle prophecies of the Druids.

Thus idly prophesied the Druids. A rumour also

¹ It is interesting to note that when Herod undertook his magnificent rebuilding of the Temple in B.C. 20-19, he was debarred by religious feeling from increasing the size of the building, but he raised it (according to Josephus) to a height of 172 feet: 'He did not dare to alter the ground-plan or interior arrangements, but he could amplify the less sacred porch, and increase the

height of the whole. If he was forbidden to extend the House, he would at least make it soar!' (Principal G. A. Smith's *Jerusalem*, vol. ii. pp. 504-5).

It will be remembered that in St. John ii. 20 occurs the passage 'Forty and six years has this Temple been building.' As Herod's Temple was begun in B.C. 20-19, the incident in St. John is fixed to A.D. 27 or 28.

had gained ground that the Gallic chiefs sent by Otho against Vitellius had pledged themselves before separating¹ to strike a blow for freedom should continual civil wars and internal troubles break down the power of the Roman people.

Outbreak
of Gallic
tribes
under
Classicus,
Tutor, and
Sabinus ;

Before the murder² of Hordeonius Flaccus 55 nothing came out from which the existence of the conspiracy could be inferred ; but after that event messages passed between Civilis and Classicus, Prefect of the Treveran Horse. Classicus was pre-eminent in birth and wealth ; he came of a royal stock, illustrious alike in peace and war, while he plumed himself more on those of his ancestors who had been enemies of Rome than on those who were her friends.³ Associated with him were Julius Tutor and Julius Sabinus, the former a Treveran, who had been appointed Warden of the banks of the Rhine by Vitellius, the latter a Lingonian,⁴ who besides being vain by nature was puffed up by an imaginary ancestral distinction, pretending that the Divine Julius during his Gallic campaigns had been attracted by his great-grandmother in Gaul, and had had adulterous intercourse with her.

These two men sounded others in secret conferences, and when they had secured the complicity of those whom they thought suitable for their purpose, they met at the Agrippinensian Colony, in a private house—for the people at large were totally opposed

¹ These words refer to the envoys and messages sent by Otho to stir up the Gauls against Vitellius, such as are mentioned in i. 74. The chiefs would naturally confer together in the crisis. There is no reason to suppose, with some edd., that these chiefs had been summoned to Rome for conference.

² As related in chap. 36.

³ Reading *socios*, instead of the *socius*

of M. That reading, however, can be defended ; it would mean 'boasted that his ancestors had taught him, or bequeathed it to him, to be the enemy, rather than the ally, of the Roman people.'

⁴ M here gives the rarer form *Lingonus*. In the plural the form *Lingones* is always found.

to their projects. Some few of the Ubii also and of the Tungri were present; but the main strength of the movement was among the Treveri and the Lingones. No time was allowed for deliberation, and it was vehemently proclaimed that:—

The Roman people had gone mad with discord; the Legions had been destroyed, and Italy devastated; Rome herself was on the point of being captured, all her armies being kept away by wars of their own: if only the Alpine passes were firmly held, their freedom would be secured, and the tribes of Gaul could discuss what limit to fix for their dominions.

they issue an inflammatory proclamation,

56 These sentiments were approved as soon as uttered; but the leaders hesitated what to do with the remnants of the Vitellian army. Many thought that men so turbulent, so disloyal, and stained with the blood of their Generals, should be made away with; but a more merciful policy prevailed from the fear that to remove all hope of pardon would but inflame them to resistance:—

Better entice them to join the movement; if only the Legates of the Legions were slain, consciousness of guilt and the hope of impunity would readily bring over the common soldiers.

and entice the German army to join them.

Such was the shape of their first resolve,¹ and they dispatched messengers throughout Gaul to stir up war, professing loyalty themselves in order to crush Vocula unawares. Vocula did not fail to be informed of these proposals; but with his depleted and untrustworthy Legions he was not strong enough to use force. Placed thus between soldiers of doubtful fidelity and secret enemies, he thought it best for the moment to

Vocula proceeds to the Colony;

¹ M reads *concilii*; but *consilii* suits the context better.

fruitless expedition to Claudius Labeo.

match fraud with fraud, and meet the enemy with his own weapons. He accordingly proceeded to the Colony, where Claudius Labeo,¹ whose capture [and removal to²] the country of the Frisii I have above recounted, had taken refuge, having succeeded in bribing his warders. This man had promised that, if furnished with troops, he would go to the Batavians and bring back to the Roman alliance the better part of that people. A small force of horse and foot was given him. He effected nothing against the Batavians; but he induced some of the Nervii³ and Baetasii to take up arms, and made attacks of a furtive rather than an open kind upon the Canninefates and the Marsaci.

Treachery of Classicus and Tutor.

Lured on by the treachery of the Gauls, Vocula 57 marched against the enemy, and had nearly reached Vetera when Classicus and Tutor, going forward on pretence of scouting, made a compact with the German leaders; they then, for the first time, separated from the Legions, and constructed for themselves a camp with defences of its own. Vocula assured his men that,

Vocula vainly attempts to keep the men loyal,

The Civil War had not given such a shock to the power of Rome that the Treveri and Lingones could hold her in contempt; she still had loyal Provinces and victorious armies; she still had with her the Fortune of the Empire, and Gods that would avenge her. It was thus that in former days Sacrovir and the Aedui⁴ had

¹ Claudius Labeo had commanded an *ala* of the Batavian auxiliaries; being at enmity with Civilis he had been sent to the country of the Frisii (chap. 18).

² M has the corrupt reading *extra commentum amendatum*. I follow F. and Nipp. in regarding *extra commentum* as a gloss, and read *aman-datum*.

³ The Nervii, the most famous of

Julius Caesar's enemies, adjoined the Batavians; the Baetasii occupied the modern Brabant, between the Nervii and the Tungri. The Marsaci were neighbours of the Canninefates, and occupied the marshy country round the mouths of the Scheldt and the Meuse.

⁴ In allusion to the last serious rising in Gaul, that of the Treveri under Julius Florus, and of the Aedui under

fallen, and more recently Vindex and the Gauls : each in a single battle. Let those who broke their treaties look for the same doom and the same avenging Gods. More rightly had the Divine Julius and the Divine Augustus understood the temper of that people : it was Galba with his remission of tribute¹ that had given them² the insolence to rebel against us. They had now become enemies because their yoke was easy : stripped and despoiled, they would be our friends once more.

These words he uttered with great determination ; but perceiving that Classicus and Tutor were resolute in their treachery, he changed his course and retreated to Novaesium. The Gauls took up a position at a distance of two miles ; and as the Centurions and soldiers kept passing to and fro, they were tempted by bribes to do a deed of shame unheard of in a Roman army—to swear allegiance to the foreigner, and pledge themselves to that great wickedness by imprisoning or murdering their Legates.³ Many advised Vocula to take flight ; but thinking that he should put on a bold face, he summoned an assembly and spoke as follows :—

and re-
treats to
Novaes-
sium,

Sacrovir, in the year A.D. 21. Various tribes joined in it for a time. The immediate cause of the outbreak was the amount of debt to the Roman money-lenders, who flooded all the provinces, and especially Gaul ; and the first act of war was the massacre of the *negotiatores*. See Ann. iii. 40 n. ; and for the history of the outbreak chaps. 40-46.

¹ This refers, once again, to the time of the rising of Vindex. Vindex had negotiated with Galba in a friendly manner ; and Galba had favoured the Gallic states which had supported Vindex, by granting them the Roman franchise, with a permanent lightening of tribute. The Gallic tribes in the neighbourhood of Germany had been differently treated ; hence the spirit of disaffection among them independently of the success of the rising of Civilis

(i. 8).

² M reads *spiritus induisse* which would give an unusual causative or factitive meaning to the verb. A similar construction occurs in Dial. 6, *accipere affectum quemcumque orator induerit*. Ritter reads *indidisse*.

³ The reason, of course, for the readiness of Roman legionaries to forget their duty and go over to the insurgents was that at this period the legions were mainly recruited in the countries in which they were stationed ; so that alike legions and auxiliaries were of the same German or Gallic origin. The rising of Civilis taught the Romans a lesson which they never forgot ; henceforth, as in the modern armies of Italy and Austria, the legions raised in one part of the empire were usually stationed in another.

Vocula
makes a
final ap-
peal to his
soldiers;

58
' *Never have I addressed you with less solicitude about myself, with more anxiety for you. To hear that my life is threatened causes me no concern: amid all these troubles I look to an honourable death to end my misery. It is for you that I feel shame and pity—you who have no battles to fight according to the laws of war¹ and the rights of belligerents—you by whose hands Classicus hopes to make war upon the Roman people, while he offers you a Gallic Empire to which you may swear allegiance.*

' *What? if fortune and valour have for the moment failed us, have we no ancient examples to tell us how often the Legions of Rome have chosen to die rather than yield their ground? how often our allies have permitted their cities to be destroyed, and themselves, their wives and children, to perish in the flames, with no reward but that of honour and their good name?*

' *At Vetera, our Legions are at this moment enduring siege and famine, unmoved by either promises or threats; whereas we, besides arms and men and a well-fortified camp, have corn enough, and supplies enough, for however long a war. Our treasure-chest sufficed but lately to provide you with a donative:² whether you prefer to say that it was the gift of Vitellius or of Vespasian, it was certainly given you by a Roman Emperor. If you, the conquerors in so many wars—you who have so often routed the enemy,³ at Vetera, at Gelduba—if you now shrink from battle, that indeed is an unworthy thing; but here we have walls and ramparts and means of dragging on the war until succouring armies from neighbouring provinces shall pour in. If my name offend you, you have other Legates; you have Tribunes, Centurions, ay, and common soldiers too: let not this monstrous news be proclaimed throughout the*

¹ For the phrases *fas armorum* and *ius hostium*, see n. on iii. 74.

² As told in chap. 36.

³ Referring to the engagements described in chaps. 33 and 34.

world, that *Civilis* and *Classicus* are about to invade Italy with you as followers!

'What? If Germans and Gauls lead you up to the walls of Rome, will you bear arms against your country? My mind recoils from a thought so infamous. Will you mount guard for Tutor the Treveran? Will you take the signal for battle from a Batavian? Will you supply recruits for the hosts of Germany? And what will come of your crime when the Roman Legions are arrayed against you? Will you desert the deserters, and betray the betrayers, as you waver, accursed of the Gods, between the old allegiance and the new?

'To thee, Jupiter, most High, most Excellent, whom we have honoured at our many Triumphs through eight hundred and twenty years;¹ to thee, Quirinus, Father of the city of Rome, I present this humble prayer:—If it be not your pleasure that this camp be kept whole and inviolate under my command, suffer it not at least to be profaned and defiled by a Tutor and a *Classicus*! Either keep our Roman soldiers innocent, or grant them, with no hurt to themselves,² a speedy penitence!

59 Between hope, fear, and shame this speech was variously received. *Vocula* withdrew; and was turning his thoughts towards his end when he was prevented by his slaves and freedmen from anticipating by his own hand a most miserable death. *Classicus* lost no time in sending *Aemilius Longinus*, a deserter from the 1st Legion, to slay him; but it was thought enough to put the Legates, *Herennius* and *Numisius*, into chains. He then assumed the imperial insignia³

he is murdered by order of *Classicus*, and the legates are thrown into chains.

¹ More exactly, 822 years.

² The phrase *sine noxa* has been differently rendered. *Noxa* is here used in its more usual sense of 'harm suffered,' i.e. by the penitents. The prayer was for their forgiveness without

punishment. In ii. 49, the word is used of guilt or harm done (*non noxa neque ob metum*); so in Ann. vi. 4 (*noxae conscientia*). *Heraeus* wrongly renders 'antequam noxam admisissent.'

³ These, it is to be supposed, can

The men swear allegiance to the Gallic Empire.

and entered the camp; but hardened though he was to every kind of wickedness, words failed him to do more than repeat the form of oath. All present swore allegiance to the Gallic Empire. Vocula's murderer received high promotion; the others were rewarded according to the help they had given in these shameful transactions.

The command was now divided between Tutor and Classicus. The former surrounded the Colony with a powerful force, and compelled the inhabitants, and all the soldiers on the Upper Rhine,¹ to take the same oath; at Mogontiacum he put the Tribunes to death, and drove the Prefect out of the camp, because they refused to take it. Classicus chose out the most corrupted of the surrendered men, and bade them go to Vetera with an offer of pardon to the besieged if they would accept the situation:—*There was no hope for them otherwise: they would have to endure the extremities of famine and the sword.* The envoys did not fail also to point to their own example.

The garrison of Vetera surrenders;

Torn this way by honour, and that way by famine, 60 the besieged hesitated between infamy and glory. As time went on, supplies failed them, whether of wanted or unwanted food; necessity had driven them to consume horses, baggage-animals, and other foul and unclean beasts, until at last they plucked up shrubs and roots and the very grass which grew among the stones—an example of piteous endurance. But at last they soiled their high name by a shameful end,²

only have been the lictors with their fasces, and the purple military cloak (*paludamentum*).

¹ These would be the soldiers of the 4th and 22nd legions at Mogontiacum, Vindonissa on the upper Rhine, where the 21st had their head-quarters, was

too far south to be reached by the insurrection.

² Mr. Henderson's prejudice against Tacitus as a strategist has led him here into a new field where his censure is surely misplaced:—'And Tacitus calmly writes, *donec egregiam laudem sine turpi*

sending envoys to Civilis to beg for their lives; but the prayer was not granted until they had sworn allegiance to the Gallic Empire. Civilis bargained for the plunder of the camp, and appointed a guard to secure the treasure, the camp-followers, and the baggage, and to escort the garrison as they marched out empty-handed. At about the 5th milestone the Germans rose upon them and attacked them unawares. The bravest of them fell where they stood, many while breaking away; the remainder fled back to the camp for refuge. Civilis, certainly, protested, and upbraided the Germans for this scandalous breach of faith; but whether this was hypocrisy on his part, or he was really unable to restrain their fury, cannot be affirmed. The camp was plundered and set on fire; all who had survived the battle perished in the flames.

they are treacherously set upon and murdered on the march.

61 Now that the slaughter of the Legions was at length accomplished, Civilis cut off his hair, which by

Civilis fulfils his vow.

macularent. Whose is the cold "disgrace" if not his who cannot realise the sufferings and the heroism of these men? No doubt he felt as he penned these lines that he was the truest Roman of them all—he, a stilted pleader at a decadent Bar.' This seems to me a taunt as unworthy as it is undeserved. The story, as told by Tacitus, is most pathetic: only he lets the tale speak for itself. Like the great artist that he is, he does not pour out his own feelings, or suggest to the reader what feelings the facts ought to raise in his mind, like the modern writer who would introduce—and spoil—a tale of woe by explaining 'Here followed a pathetic incident' (See *Introd. to Vol. II. p. lxxxii.*). The modern reader, no doubt, too often needs a showman to explain to him the true bearing of what he reads; not so the reader of Tacitus. As to the censure contained in *fine turpi macularent* we must remember that to a Roman, under any circumstances, surrender carried with it disgrace: and there is no justification for the taunt that Tacitus 'no doubt felt that he was

the truest Roman of them all.' I find no trace of poor personal vanity or self-satisfaction in the whole of the writings of Tacitus. Nor can I see that the words 'stilted pleader of a decadent bar' are justified in the passage before us. All through his *Histories* the 'stilted pleader' shows himself keenly alive to all the human issues involved. Deep as are his wrath and indignation against every form of tyranny, vice, and wrongdoing, it is impossible not to be conscious of the tender human heart beating below, keenly alive to the pathetic. And what has 'the decadent bar' to do with it? when we remember that the whole life and writings of Tacitus were a protest against the decadence into which the bar of his day had fallen, while his very style was deliberately adopted as a mode of recalling to his contemporaries the manly vigour, the spirit of freedom, and the sense of public duty, which animated the Roman bar in its palmy days. If the Roman bar of the days of Tacitus was decadent, it was because its ideals were the reverse of his,

a barbaric vow, made on taking up arms against Rome, he had allowed to grow long, and dyed with red; it was reported also that he set up some of the captives as marks for his little son to shoot at with his childish javelins and arrows. But he did not himself take the oath of allegiance to the Gallic Empire, nor compel any Batavian to do so; for if it should come to a contest with the Gauls for mastery, he trusted to the superior power of the Germans and to his own high reputation to secure it.

Murder of
the Legate
Lupercus.

The legionary Legate Munius Lupercus was sent amongst other gifts as an offering to Veleda, a maiden of the Bructeran tribe whose authority was acknowledged¹ far and near; for the Germans from ancient times have believed in the prophetic powers of women, and even carry their superstition so far as to hold them to be divine. At that moment Veleda's influence was greater than ever, for she had foretold the successes of the Germans and the destruction of the Legions. Lupercus was murdered on the march; a few of the Tribunes and Centurions who were natives of Gaul were kept as a pledge of Gallic loyalty.

The winter camps of the Legions and of the auxiliary horse and foot were pulled down and burnt; none were left standing except those at Mogontiacum and Vindonissa.²

The 16th
Legion and

The 16th Legion,³ with the auxiliaries who had

¹ The word *imperitabat* here seems to refer to a moral ascendancy, not to an actual sovereignty as in the case of Queen Boudicca.

² Thus perished, for a time, the power of Rome on the Rhine. But it was a short-lived triumph. A Gallic Empire was not to the taste of Civilis and his German allies; he declined to subscribe to it; and the internal

jealousies of the Gallic tribes, which had so continuously paved the way for the advance of Rome, proved fatal to the cause of Gallic or Germanic independence at the very moment when its successes in the field seemed to justify the demand for it.

³ The 16th legion, as we have seen, had its head-quarters at Novaesium.

surrendered at the same time, were then ordered to shift their quarters from Novaesium to the Treveran Colony,¹ a day being fixed before which they were to leave the camp. During the days that intervened many anxious thoughts passed through their minds. The cowardly were terrified by the fate of those massacred at Vetera; the better sort were overwhelmed with shame:—

auxiliaries
are ordered
to Trèves.

What kind of a march was this to be? Who was to be their guide? They were at the mercy of the men whom they had made masters of their lives!

Others, who thought nothing of the disgrace, secured their money and their valuables about their persons; some got ready their armour,² and girded themselves with arms, as if for battle. While thus preparing, the hour for their departure came: it proved more grievous than the expectation. For inside the camp their deplorable condition was not so much to be noticed; in the open, and in the light of day, their humiliation was exposed. The images of the Emperors had been torn down; the standards were undecorated, while those of the Gauls were glittering on each side of them; they marched in silence as in a long funeral procession. Their leader was one Claudius Sanctus, a man disfigured by the loss of an eye, and with a mind still more incapable than his body.

And when they were joined by the other³ Legion, which had deserted its camp at Bonn, the disgrace seemed doubled. For as soon as the news of the

They are
joined by
the 1st
Legion.

¹ The chief town of the Treveri, made into a colony by Augustus under the name of Augusta Treverorum (the modern Trier or Trèves), lay on the right bank of the Moselle, about half-way up its course from its junction with the Rhine at Confluentes (*Coblenz*). Its importance was great,

especially in later times; here is the famous *Porta Nigra*, and other Roman remains.

² *Arma* in this passage seems to mean defensive armour: *scuta, galeae, loricae*.

³ *I.e.* the 1st legion, whose station was always at Bonn.

capture of the Legions got abroad, all who had a little before trembled at the name of Rome poured forth from their fields and houses on every side, and revelled over the unwonted spectacle.

The Picentine Horse breaks loose.

One body of Horse—the Picentine¹—was unable to endure the jeers and insults of the rabble. Disregarding alike the threats and promises of Sanctus, they made off for Mogontiacum; and chancing on the way to meet Longinus, the man who had murdered Vocula, they overwhelmed him beneath their javelins, and thus took a first step towards expiating their crime. The Legions, continuing their march, encamped before the walls of the Treveran Colony.

Proposal to give up the Colony to be plundered.

Elated by these successes, Civilis and Classicus⁶³ debated whether to hand over the Agrippinensian Colony to be plundered by their armies. Their natural savagery, and their lust for spoil, inclined them to destroy the city; but policy forbade:—*It would be well to establish a character for clemency at the founding of a new Empire.*

Civilis was moved also by the recollection of a kindness shown to his son, who had been honourably treated when taken prisoner in the Colony at the beginning of the revolt. But the city was hateful to the Transrhenane tribes because of its wealth and prosperity; and they thought that there could be no end to the war unless either the city were thrown open to all Germans without distinction, or else the city were destroyed and the Ubii dispersed.

Fierce demands of the Tencteri.

Thereupon the Tencteri, a tribe on the further bank⁶⁴ of the Rhine, sent envoys to put their demands before

¹ Another of the special corps of cavalry like the *ala Petriana* (chap. 49), and *ala Siliana* (i. 70). The name

has been found in inscriptions both at Mainz and in Britain.

the Council of the Agrippinensians. These were thus stated by the most violent of their number :—

'For your return to the nation and name of Germans, we give thanks to the Gods whom we in common worship, and to Mars,¹ the chiefest of them; and we congratulate you that you will at last be free men among the free. Up to this day the Romans have closed land and river, and in some sort the very heavens, against us, preventing us from meeting and holding converse together unless unarmed² and almost naked—an insult more grievous still for men born to arms—and that only for price paid, and under a warder's eye.

'But now, in order that friendship and fellowship may be for ever fast between us, we ask of you to pull down those muniments of slavery, your walls—for even wild beasts forget their valour if they are caged—and to slay all Romans within your bounds, seeing that liberty and masters are things that will not mingle. Let the goods of the slain pass into the common stock, that no one be able to hide anything, or to separate his cause from ours. Be it lawful for us and for you to live upon either bank, as did our fathers of old; for as Nature gave to all men the light of day, so has she left all lands open to the brave. Resume the manners and customs of your country; cast off the pleasures by which, no less than by their arms, the Romans prevail against their subjects.³ So shall your people remain whole and undefiled; so will you forget your bondage, and either live equal among equals, or have dominion over others.'

65 The Agrippinensians took time for consideration. Dread of the future prevented them from submitting

The Agrippinensians succeed in

¹ 'The God called by this name is Tiu or Zio, whose name is still preserved in our "Tuesday"' (Spooner).

² A great indignity for Germans,

who *nihil neque publicae neque privatae rei nisi armati agunt* (Germ. 13).

³ See this idea expounded in Agric. 21.

pacifying
them.

to these terms ; nor did their present condition permit of their rejecting them. They replied accordingly as follows :—

'We have seized our first chance of liberty with more eagerness than caution, so as to unite ourselves to you and to our other German kinsmen ; but at a moment when the Roman armies are gathering against us, it were safer to add to our walls than to throw them down. If there have been aliens in our borders, from Italy or the Provinces, they have all either perished in the war, or fled to their own homes. Those who were settled here at the first,¹ and became joined to us by marriage, have here found a country for themselves and for their offspring ; we cannot think you so cruel that you would bid us slay our parents, our brethren, and our children. All tolls and burdens upon trade we will remit. Let passage across the river be free, but only by day, and for the unarmed, until rights that will be new and strange at first become customary with time. Let Civilis and Velede be made arbiters to ratify our compact.'

This speech pacified the Tencteri. Envoys with presents were sent to Civilis and Velede ; they secured all that the inhabitants of the Colony desired. But they were not allowed access to Velede, nor speech with her ; they were kept from seeing her that they might venerate her the more. She herself lived in a lofty tower ; a chosen kinsman carried questions, and the answers to them, to and fro, as though he were the messenger of a God.

Claudius
Labeo re-
sists Civilis,

Thus strengthened by alliance with the Agrippin- 66
ensians, Civilis resolved to ask the adhesion of the

¹ It is true that the replenishing of the colony with veterans, and its new name of *Agrippinensis*, only dated from the year A.D. 50. But the Ubii had been brought over the Rhine by Agrippa

in B.C. 37 ; the town had long been the head-quarters of the army of Lower Germany ; and Agrippina herself had been born there (Ann. xii. 27).

neighbouring states, or to make war on them if they refused. He seized the country of the Sunuci¹ and arranged their youth in cohorts; but his further advance was stopped by Claudius Labeo,² who opposed him with a hastily-raised levy of Baetasians, Tungrians, and Nervians, trusting to a strong position which he had secured at a bridge across the Meuse. In that narrow space the fight was long doubtful, until the Germans, swimming across the river, took Labeo in the rear; and at the same moment Civilis, by an act of daring which was perhaps premeditated, threw himself among the Tungrians, shouting out—'*We have not taken up arms in order that Batavians and Treverans may lord it over other nations; far be such arrogance from us! Make common cause with us, and I will come over to you, whether you wish for me as a leader or as a private soldier!*'

but is
defeated.

Moved by this appeal, the multitude were sheathing their swords when the Tungrian leaders, Campanus and Juvenalis, surrendered their whole tribe; Labeo fled before he could be captured. Civilis received also the submission of the Baetasians and Nervians, adding their forces to his own; he was now in a commanding position,³ having cowed the tribes which were not joining him of their own will.

Civilis
gains over
several
Gallic
tribes.

67 Meanwhile Julius Sabinus,⁴ having thrown down the monuments⁵ on which the treaty with Rome was recorded, proclaimed that he was to be saluted as Caesar; and at the head of a huge undisciplined body

Sabinus
defeated
by the
Sequani.

¹ The Sunuci were a tribe adjoining the Ubii on the west, between the Meuse and the Roer.

² For Claudius Labeo see chap. 56.

³ The fine phrase *ingens rerum* has been objected to because 'there is no distinct parallel for this absolute use of

rerum.' Possibly not: and it is perhaps all the more certainly Tacitean on that account.

⁴ For Julius Sabinus, see chap. 55.

⁵ Treaties and laws might be engraved either on bronze tablets (chap. 40), or on tablets or pillars of stone.

of his countrymen, made a rapid march against the neighbouring tribe of Sequani, who were still loyal to us. Nor did the Sequani shrink from the encounter: the better cause prevailed, and the Lingones were routed, Sabinus proving as cowardly in abandoning the fight as he had been rash in provoking it. Wishing to create a report that he was dead, he set fire to the house in which he had taken refuge, and was supposed to have there perished by his own act. How he prolonged his life for ten¹ more years in skilfully chosen hiding-places; how faithful were his friends, and what a noble example was set by his wife Epponina, shall be related in the proper place.²

This
victory
stemmed
the tide of
the war.

The victory of the Sequani stemmed the tide of the war. The insurgent communities returned gradually to their senses, and bethought them of their duty and their treaties. The Remi³ led the way, sending notices throughout Gaul inviting the attendance of deputies to consult in common, and resolve on Liberty or Peace.

Measures
of Muci-
anus in
Rome.

The news of these disasters, exaggerated in Rome, 68 greatly disquieted Mucianus; he was afraid that even the excellent Generals whom he had already appointed—Gallus Annius⁴ and Petilius Cerialis⁵—might prove unequal to the conduct of the war.⁶ Yet the city could not be left without a ruler; he was alarmed by the furious passions of Domitian; and, as already

¹ *I.e.* till the year A.D. 79, when he and his wife were caught, brought to Rome, and put to death.

² This promise must have been fulfilled in the portion of the *Histories* which is lost. Both Dio (lxvi. 3 and 16) and Plutarch (*Amat.* 25) tell the story.

³ The Remi, whose head town was Durocortorum (the modern *Reims*), were quite outside the centre of disturbance, occupying the country be-

tween the Marne and the Aisne.

⁴ One of Otho's chief generals; see i. 87, ii. 11, 23, 33, 44.

⁵ It will be remembered that Cerialis conducted the advance of the Flavian cavalry against Rome. See iii. 59 and 79-80.

⁶ *Summa belli* means 'the conduct of the war as a whole'; *i.e.* the command-in-chief.

mentioned, he looked with suspicion on Primus Antonius and Varus Arrius. As Prefect of the Praetorians, Varus held in his hands the power of the sword: Mucianus ejected him from that office, and by way of consolation appointed him Superintendent of the Markets; and then, in order to smooth down Domitian, who was friendly to Varus, he gave the Praetorian command to Arrecinus Clemens, a man connected with the family of Vespasian, and a particular friend of Domitian, affirming that, *His father had filled that office excellently under the Emperor Gaius; his name was popular with the soldiers; and though Clemens was a member of the Senate,*¹ *he would be equal to the performance of both duties.*

All the most distinguished citizens were taken on² to serve in the campaign; others made use of interest to get named. Domitian and Mucianus both prepared for it, though in very different moods: the former filled with all the hopes and ardour of his years, the latter contriving delays to hold back the impetuous youth; for he feared that if Domitian, with his boyish self-confidence, and under bad advisers, should take command of the army, the consequences, whether for peace or war, might be disastrous. The 8th,³ 11th, and 13th Legions on the victorious side, the 21st from the Vitellians, and the newly-enrolled

He sets out with Domitian for the war. Large forces are sent over the Alps and brought over from Spain and Britain.

¹ The Praetorian command was properly an equestrian one, *i.e.* held by knights. It is interesting to find from what follows that certain offices—such as that of the *praefectus praetorio*—were considered incompatible with the discharge of ordinary senatorial duties. Other important offices and commissions were frequently given to senators. There was probably a political motive in excluding senators from the command of the Praetorians.

² *I.e.* were taken on as part of the suite of the commanders.

³ It will be remembered that the 8th

legion (*Augusta*), under the legate Numisius Lupus, had been stationed in Moesia and had joined Antonius Primus before Verona (iii. 10); the 11th (*Claudia*) had been in Dalmatia, wavered at first, but joined Antonius shortly after the sack of Cremona (iii. 50); the 13th, from Pannonia, had fought with Antonius; the 21st (*Rapax*), quartered at Vindonissa, had descended into Italy with Caecina, and had fought for Vitellius in both battles of Bedriacum; while the 2nd (*Adiutrix e classicis*) had been hastily raised from the sailors of the fleet.

2nd Legion, were taken over the Pennine and Cottian Alps, some also over the Graian;¹ the 14th² Legion was summoned from Britain, the 6th³ and the 1st from Spain.

Meeting
of Gallic
States at
Reims.

The news of the approaching army, and their own more moderate temper, induced the Gallic States to assemble in the country of the Remi. They were there awaited by envoys from the Treveri, when Julius Valentinus, the most ardent fomentor of the war—an agitator and sedition-monger, with a gift of frantic eloquence which pleased the multitude—delivered a set harangue, repeating all the charges usually brought against great Empires, and pouring forth insults and contumely upon the Roman people.

The
majority
declare
for peace.

But Julius Auspex, a chief of the Remi, discoursed 69 upon the power of Rome, and the blessings of peace, endeavouring to hold back the wiser men by appeals to their feelings of loyalty and duty, the younger by warning them of the dangers before them:—

Cowards might begin a war, but its perils were for the brave: the Legions would soon be upon them.

Valentinus was commended for his spirit; but the counsels of Auspex were adopted.

Jealousies
between
the
different
states.

The cause of the Treveri and the Lingones was no doubt injured in the eyes of the Gauls by their having taken the part of Verginius during the war with Vindex;⁴ but many were kept back by inter-tribal jealousy:—

Where was to be the command in war? From whom

¹ Thus the reinforcements were sent over all the three great passes, the Pennine (*Great St. Bernard*); the Graian (*Little St. Bernard*); and the Cottian (*Mt. Genève*). See n. on i. 61.

² The 14th (*Gemina Martia Victrix*), as we have seen, had been sent back to Britain, mainly because of the quarrel

with the Batavian cohorts (ii. 66).

³ The 6th (*Victrix*) and the 10th (*Gemina*), both quartered in Spain, had come over at once to Vespasian at the instigation of the 1st (*Adiutrix*), not having previously taken any part in the war (iii. 44).

⁴ See i. 8 and n.

*were they to take their Law and their auspices? and if all went well with them, what was to be the Capital?*¹

The discord was there; but not yet the victory. Some loudly boasted of their treaties, others of their wealth, their numbers, or their ancient origin: distrustful of the future, they preferred to accept the present.

And so a letter was dispatched to the Treveri in the name of the Gallic states bidding them keep the peace:—*Pardon was still open; intercessors would not be wanting if they repented.* But Valentinus still opposed, and stopped the ears of his countrymen to this advice, being a man more given to making speeches than to preparing resolutely for war.

70 Thus neither the Treveri nor the Lingones nor the other revolting states took measures adequate to the magnitude of the risk undertaken. Even their leaders failed to act in concert; for while Civilis was ranging through the wilds of Belgium in an attempt to capture or to drive off Claudius Labeo, Classicus, in listless ease, seemed to be revelling in an empire already won; even Tutor made no haste to occupy the Upper Rhine, or to secure the Alpine passes. Meanwhile the 21st Legion had come up from Vindonissa; Sextilius Felix broke in with an auxiliary force through Raetia; besides which a body of special auxiliary Horse² arrived which had been called up by Vitellius some time before, and had afterwards gone over to Vespasian. This corps was commanded by Julius Briganticus,

The Treveri and Lingones continue the war, but without cohesion.

Roman reinforcements come up.

¹ How difficult and acute such a question may become in cases of confederation is illustrated by the fixing upon Washington as the Capital of the United States; and by the similar difficulties recently encountered in S. Africa and in the Commonwealth

of Australia. Only by autocratic authority could the Capital of India have been transferred to Delhi.

² From this time onwards a special cavalry corps, specially recruited, and hence called *Singulares*, seems to have been common among the allies.

sister's son to Civilis: uncle and nephew hated each other with all the bitterness peculiar to quarrels between relations.

The Treveran forces under Tutor had been reinforced by fresh levies from the Vangiones, the Caeracates, and the Triboci; these he stiffened with some legionary veterans, horse and foot, whom he had corrupted or intimidated. These last began by cutting up a cohort which had been sent on ahead by Sextilius Felix;¹ but on the approach of the Roman Generals and their armies, they passed over again, by an honourable act of desertion, to their own side—an example followed by the Triboci, the Vangiones, and the Caeracates.²

Tutor defeated on the Nava.

Avoiding Mogontiacum, Tutor retreated with the Treveri to Bingium, trusting to a position on the river Nava where he had broken down a bridge; but he was attacked by some auxiliaries under Sextilius, a ford was found, and he was betrayed and routed. This defeat shattered the Treveri; the common people threw down their arms, and dispersed about the country; while some of the leaders, wishing to be thought to have been the first to give up hostilities, took refuge in the cities which had not broken with Rome. The Legions which, as I have related, had been brought over from Novaesium and Bonn to the city of the Treveri, administered to themselves the oath of allegiance to Vespasian.

Return of mutinous legions to their allegiance.

Activity of Valentinus.

This happened in the absence of Valentinus; but

¹ Sextilius Felix had embraced the Flavian cause from the beginning. To guard against a possible inroad of German troops through the hostile Raetia, and over the Brenner Pass, he had taken up a position on the Inn with the Aurian Horse, eight cohorts

of auxiliaries, and some Norican levies (iii. 5).

² These three tribes seem to have been situated near the Rhine, probably on both banks, between Mainz and Speyer.

when he arrived, full of fury, ready to throw everything into ruin and confusion, the Legions withdrew to the friendly country of the Mediomatrici; Valentinus and Tutor dragged the Treveri back to arms, and slew the Legates Herennius and Numisius,¹ thinking that in proportion as the hope of pardon was lessened, the bond of treason would be the stronger.²

71 Thus stood the war when Petilius Cerialis reached Mogontiacum. Hope returned with his arrival; keen for battle himself, more ready to despise his enemy than to take measures of precaution, he fired his soldiers by spirited harangues, being resolved to engage the enemy at the earliest opportunity. The levies that had been raised throughout Gaul he sent back to their homes, bidding them say that, *The Legions were enough for the Empire: let the allies return to the works of peace, feeling as secure as though the war were over now that it had fallen into Roman hands.*

Arrival of
Petilius
Cerialis
at Mainz.

This confirmed the Gauls in their obedience. The return of their young men made the tribute less burdensome to them; and their services were the more readily offered that they were no longer required.

When Civilis and Classicus heard that Tutor had been repulsed, and the Treveri cut to pieces, and that all was going well with the enemy, they brought their scattered forces together in trembling haste, and sent urgent messages to warn Valentinus not to risk a decisive battle. This quickened the

He routs
the Treveri
at Rigodulum, and
captures
Valentinus.

¹ These were the legates of the 1st and 16th legions who had been thrown into chains when Vocula was murdered (chap. 59).

The confusion of metaphor in the

phrase *cresceret vinculum sceleris* is striking. Tac. is so fond of using the words *augeo* and *cresco* in a mere general sense that he has forgotten their original meaning.

movements of Cerialis. Dispatching couriers to the *Mediomatrici* to guide the Legions against the enemy by the shortest route, and combining what troops there were at *Mogontiacum*¹ with his own, he arrived in three marches at *Rigodulum*,² a place closed in by hills on one side and by the river *Moselle* on the other, where *Valentinus* had taken his stand with a strong force of *Treveri*, having further strengthened the position with a ditch and a rampart of stones. But the Roman General was not to be daunted by these defences. Holding in contempt the hastily-raised levies of the enemy, and knowing that no advantage of position could outmatch the superior valour of his own men, he ordered his foot to carry the rampart, while the cavalry ascended the hill behind. The latter were somewhat delayed in the ascent until the men got past the enemy's missiles; but as soon as they came to close quarters with them, they hurled them headlong down. A detachment of the cavalry, making a circuit over some lower heights, captured the principal Belgian chiefs, *Valentinus* among the number.

He will not allow the destruction of Trèves.

Next day *Cerialis* entered the city of the *Treveri*. 72
The soldiers clamoured for its destruction:—

This was the country, they cried, of Classicus and of Tutor; it was by their treason that our Legions had

¹ The legions at *Mogontiacum* were what remained of the 4th and 22nd. After the death of *Vocula* and the surrender of the remainder, the tribune and camp prefect had been killed (chap. 59). *Cerialis* at first had only the 21st legion; afterwards the 2nd, 6th, and 14th.

² The modern *Riol* in the valley of the *Moselle*. The road from *Bingen* to *Trèves*, after crossing the *Nahe*, left the *Rhine* and ran up the right bank of the *Moselle*. The distance from *Bingen* to *Trèves* is about 70 miles. The hill at *Riol* was close to the right bank of the *Moselle*, its steepest side

facing the Romans as they came up the valley. The *montes* mentioned by *Tac.* are apparently the hill of *Riol* itself; the Roman cavalry made a circuit round the S. of the hill, till the easier slopes on the W. of the hill were reached. The foot meantime attacked in front, stormed the position, and sent the enemy flying over the W. extremity of the hill, where they were received by the Roman cavalry, who during their march round had suffered from missiles discharged from the hill on to their right flank.

been besieged and butchered. What crime equal to theirs had Cremona committed—Cremona, that had been torn out of the heart of Italy because it had delayed the conquerors for a single night? Here was a city on the confines of Germany left intact while revelling in the spoils of our armies and the slaughter of our Generals! Let the plunder be paid into¹ the Imperial Treasury: enough for them to witness the flames and the ruins of a rebellious Colony, as a set-off against so many Roman camps destroyed.

Cerialis, however, fearing to gain an ill name if he gave his soldiers a taste for savagery and license, restrained their wrath; and the soldiers obeyed, more tractable towards a foreign foe now that the Civil War was over.

All minds then turned to the piteous plight of the Legions that had been brought over from the country of the Mediomatrici. There they stood, cast down by the consciousness of their shame, their eyes fixed upon the ground. No salutations passed between the armies as they met; consolation and exhortations met with no response; the men hid themselves in their tents, shunning the very light of day. It was not so much fear or danger that benumbed them, as a sense of shame at their disgrace: even the victorious soldiers were struck dumb, not daring to speak, or to entreat for them, but asking for their pardon in silence and with tears. Cerialis at last uttered some comforting words:—

What had happened, he said, through dissensions between soldiers and Generals, or by the evil devices² of

¹ *Redigere* is the regular word for 'paying in,' or 'calling in,' money to a fund.

² It is to be noticed that the word *fraus*, though often connected with

dolus, perfidia, etc. does not necessarily mean 'fraud,' but may be used of any kind of wickedness. Thus in iii. 72, it is said that the Capitol, in the previous civil wars, *arserat fraude privata*.

Piteous condition of the surrendered legions;

they are re-admitted to their allegiance.

their enemies, had been the work of Fate; let them regard that day as the first of their service and of their allegiance: neither the Emperor nor himself had memory for past misdoings.

The men were then received into the one camp with the rest; and an order was passed round the maniples that no one in the course of any quarrel or altercation was to taunt a fellow-soldier with his insubordination or defeat.

Soon after this Cerialis summoned an assembly 73
of the Treveri and Lingones, and addressed them as follows:—

'I am no practised orator;¹ it is by arms that I have maintained the valour of the Roman people. But since words count for much with you, and since good and evil are estimated, not by what they are in themselves, but by what is said of them by sedition-mongers, I am minded to tell you a few things which, now that the war is over, it may be more expedient for you to hear than for me to say.²

'When the Generals and Emperors of Rome entered your country, and that of the other Gauls, it was not from greed, but on the invitation of your forefathers, when they were being brought to ruin by intestine discord, and the Germans, whom they had summoned to their aid, had imposed their yoke upon friend and foe alike. How many battles we fought against the Cimbrians and the Teutons;³ what toils our armies underwent in their German wars, and with what results, are things known to

¹ The phrase here used—*neque ego umquam facundiam exercui*—is the forerunner of the modern well-worn phrase, 'Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking.'

² *I.e.* his words may possibly rouse their wrath against him.

³ Referring, of course, to the great victories of Marius over the Teutones at

Aquæ Sextiæ (*Aix*) in B.C. 102, and of Marius and Catulus over the Cimbri at Campi Randii (*Vercelli*) in the year following. The *Germanica bella* were mainly those under Drusus, Tiberius, and Germanicus, especially the last, after whose campaigns the idea of further advance into Germany was abandoned (*Ann.* i. and ii.).

all. It was not to protect Italy that we occupied the banks of the Rhine, but that no second Ariovistus should make himself King over the Gauls. Do you suppose that Civilis and his Batavians, and the tribes beyond the Rhine, have more love for you than their ancestors had for your fathers and your grandfathers? One thing, and one thing only, has brought the Germans over into Gaul—their own greed and avarice: a longing for new abodes, a desire to abandon their own swamps and solitudes, and to take possession of these most fertile lands of yours—ay, and of yourselves also. They hold out indeed the specious name of liberty; but never yet did man covet dominion and mastery over others without using that selfsame word!

74 'Never was Gaul without wars and kingships¹ until you came under the rule of Rome; and we Romans, though provoked so often, have exercised no victors' rights save that of maintaining peace. For there can be no peace without armies, no armies without pay, and no pay without tribute:² all else is held in common between us. You yourselves are often in command of our Legions; you yourselves may be Governors of these and other Provinces; nothing is closed or barred against you. The benefits enjoyed under good Emperors you enjoy equally with others, though you live so far away; the cruelties of bad Emperors fall upon those who are on the spot. The passions³ and the cupidity of rulers are things to be endured like deficient harvests, excessive rains, and other natural evils. There will be vices as long as man endures; but they are

¹ The name of king always suggested to a Roman the idea of tyranny and despotism, partly from Roman memories, partly from its association with Eastern monarchies.

² This assertion accords with the theory of Roman taxation in the provinces that it was properly a war indemnity. Hence the name *stipendium*

('soldiers' pay') which was given to the direct taxation imposed on provincials. It could be levied even on nations that were declared free (Greenidge, *Roman Public Life*, p. 319).

³ The meaning of *luxus* here is fixed by the antithesis with *avaritiam*, not 'luxury and greed' as translated by Mr. Fyfe. See n. on i. 13.

not continuous; they are compensated by intervals of better things: unless perchance you hope that Tutor and Civilis will rule with a gentler sway, or that armies to keep off the Britons and the Germans can be provided by a lesser tribute than you pay now. If the Romans be driven forth—which God forbid!—what will the end be but war of all the nations against each other? The fabric of this state of ours has been welded together by the good fortune and the discipline of eight hundred years; it cannot be torn asunder save with the destruction of its destroyers. And your peril will be the greatest—you who have the gold and the wealth which are the main provocatives to war.

*'Be lovers therefore of Peace; love and revere the city which belongs, by equal right, to conquerors and to conquered; take warning from your experiences of either fortune not to prefer ruin with rebellion, to submission along with safety.'*¹

Such were the words by which Cerialis exalted his hearers and calmed their fears.

While the country of the Treveri was thus held² 75 by the victorious army, Civilis and Classicus sent

Vain over-
tures of
Civilis and

¹ Nowhere in the classics do we find the Roman claim to Empire, and the justification for its continuance, more powerfully, more simply, and on the whole more justly, put than in this passage. The speech represents the attitude of the best Roman statesmanship of the time; and its confident, optimistic tone may well be justified by the celebrated words of Gibbon (chap. iii.):—

'If a man were called to fix the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus. The vast extent of the Roman Empire was governed by absolute power, under the guidance of virtue and wisdom,' etc. How Tacitus would have rejoiced to

see such confirmation of the fine words of optimism which he—so often pessimistic—applies to the beginning of the above happy period in chap. i. of his *Histories*. Much of the speech of Cerialis, with additions perhaps, rather than corrections, might be applied to our own Indian Empire. Its main justification certainly is to be found in the words, *nam pulsus, quod di prohibeant, Romanis quid aliud quam bella omnium inter se gentium existent?* Where is the 'stilted pleading' to be found in this passage?

² The word *tenebantur* seems to have partly the meaning of 'being held in by' or 'kept under,' partly that of mere occupation. In iii. 12 Tac. speaks of Dalmatia and Pannonia *quae provinciae Vespasiano tenebantur*, where the meaning seems to be 'were held in the interests of Vespasian.' So in i. 76, ii. 17, etc.

a letter to Cerialis, of which the purport was as follows:—

Classicus
to Cerialis.

Vespasian, they declared, though the news was being suppressed, was dead; Rome and Italy were exhausted by the Civil War; Mucianus and Domitian were but empty names, with no power behind. If Cerialis desired a Gallic Empire for himself, they¹ would be content with their own territories; if he preferred war, they were ready for that also.

To Classicus and Civilis, Cerialis sent no reply; but he sent on the letter itself and the messenger to Domitian.

The enemy now divided their forces and advanced from several quarters. Many blamed Cerialis for permitting them to unite, when he might have cut off each division separately. The Roman army drew a ditch and rampart round their camp, which up to that time had carelessly been left unfortified.

They
march
against
him.

76 Among the Germans there was a conflict of opinions. Civilis thought they should wait for the tribes from beyond the Rhine, *the terror of whose name would shatter the already shaken strength of Rome. What else would the Gauls be but plunder for the conquerors? what strength they had lay with the Belgians: ² and the Belgians, either openly or at heart, were on their side.*

Division of
opinion
among the
Germans.
Civilis
advocates
delay;

Tutor on the other hand maintained that:—

Delay would add to the Roman strength: their armies were gathering on every side. One Legion³ had been brought over from Britain; some had been called up from Spain,

Tutor is
for im-
mediate
conflict.

¹ The force of *ipsos* is not easily brought out in English. The rebel chiefs tempt Cerialis with the offer of a Gallic Empire, asking only to keep their own territories for themselves.

² So says Caesar: *horum omnium*

fortissimi sunt Belgae (Bell. Gall. i. 1).

³ *I.e.* the 14th; the legions from Spain, as we have seen, were the 6th (*Victrix*) and the 1st (*Adiutrix*); those from Italy the 8th (*Augusta*), the 11th (*Claudia*), and the 21st (*Rapax*).

others were approaching from Italy : and these were no hastily-raised recruits, but veterans tried in war. The Germans, upon whom their hopes were built, would obey no orders, and submit to no control ; they did what was good in their own eyes ; nothing but gifts and money would gain them over, and of these the Romans had the greater supply. And what man was so enamoured of war that he would not choose peace at the same price as peril ?¹ If battle were joined at once, Cerialis would have no Legions with him but the remains of the German Army ; and these were fast bound by compacts with the Gallic States.

The very fact that, contrary to their own expectations, they had routed the raw levy of Valentinus, would feed their own and their General's rashness : they would again venture on battle, and be met, not by an inexperienced youth practising himself in words and speeches rather than in arms and battle, but by a *Civilis* and a *Classicus*, the very sight of whom would recall fear, flight, and famine to their minds, and remind them how often they had been prisoners begging for their lives. It was not good will towards Rome that was keeping back the *Treveri* and the *Lingones* : as soon as their fears subsided, they would take up arms once more.

Classicus put an end to the controversy by approving the advice of Tutor, which was at once carried into execution.

The centre was assigned to the *Ubi*² and the *Lingones* ; on the right were placed the *Batavian* cohorts, the *Bructeri* and the *Tencteri* on the left. One part of the force marched over the hills, another

They resolve to attack Cerialis.

Cerialis is surprised,

¹ The alliteration may be pardoned as coming from the text : *neminem adeo in arma pronum ut non idem pretium quietis quam periculi malit.* A few lines below we have an alliteration still

more clamant : *formidinem fugam famemque.*

² The *Ubi*, though a tribe so favoured of Rome, had been forced to join the revolt (chap. 66).

between the Moselle and the road ; and so sudden was the attack that Cerialis, who had passed the night away from the camp, and was in his chamber and even in bed at the time, was informed of the fighting and of the defeat of his own men at one and the same moment. He rebuked the messengers for their terror, until he saw with his own eyes the whole extent of the disaster—the camp of the Legions forced, the cavalry routed, and the bridge over the Moselle which lay between, connecting the further with the hither town, in the possession of the enemy. Amid this scene of confusion Cerialis was undismayed, dragging back fugitives with his hand, boldly exposing himself without armour to the enemy's missiles, till by his happy audacity, and the coming up of his best men, he succeeded in recovering the bridge, and placed a picked force to hold it. Returning to the camp, he found the maniples of the Legions¹ which had surrendered at Novaesium and Bonn in disorder, the standards almost deserted, the eagles all but surrounded by the enemy. In a fury of indignation he cried out:—

but gallantly
retrieves
the day.

'It is no Flaccus, no Vocula, that you are deserting ! It is no case of treachery to-day ! My one fault has been that in a fond moment I believed that you had forgotten your pact with the Gauls, and had remembered, once again, your oath of allegiance to Rome. Shall I be counted with the Numisii and the Herennii, so that all your Legates shall have fallen by the hands either of their own soldiers or of the enemy ? Go and report to Vespasian—or to Civilis and to Classicus, who are nearer at hand—that you have deserted your General on the field ! Other legions will arrive which will neither leave me un-avenged, nor you unpunished.'

¹ These being the 1st and 16th.

He is successful in a further encounter,

There was truth in these words; and similar rebukes were administered by the Tribunes and the Prefects. The men formed up by cohorts and by maniples; for as they were fighting inside the entrenchments against a scattered enemy, and with tents and baggage in their way, there was no room to draw out a regular line of battle. 78

Tutor, Classicus, and Civilis, each in his own place, urged on the battle; calling on the Gauls to fight for liberty, the Batavians for glory, and the Germans for plunder. And the enemy had the best of it until the 21st Legion, having more room to rally in than the others, first sustained, and then hurled back, the enemy's onset. Then by some divine interposition¹ the conquerors suddenly lost heart and fled, their own account of the matter being that they took fright on sighting the auxiliaries who had been routed by the first encounter, and who now, re-forming on the hill-tops, presented the appearance of a fresh reinforcement. But what really stopped them in the moment of victory was a wretched struggle among themselves for plunder, which turned them away from the enemy in pursuit of spoil. And so Cerialis, having all but lost the day through his carelessness, retrieved it by his intrepidity; following up his victory, he captured and destroyed the enemy's camp on the same day.

and captures the enemy's camp.

Germans butchered by the

But the soldiers had no long repose allowed to them. The Agrippinensians called for help, 79

¹ The words *nec sine ope divina* with which this sentence emphatically begins, without any *velut* or *quasi* to indicate a mere form of speech, seem to mean something more than the conventional use of similar formulae, such as are found in Sallust, Frag. iv. 60 and Caesar, Bell. Gall. ii. 31, 2, and elsewhere.

In a moment of crisis like this, where there was no room for rhetoric, they almost suggest that Tac., half unconsciously, let drop the veil behind which he usually screens his own opinions, and permits us to claim him as a believer in the helpful agency of the Gods.‡

offering to give up the wife and sister of Civilis, and the daughter of Classicus, who had been left with them as pledges of the alliance. Meanwhile, having butchered the Germans scattered about in private houses, they had good reason to be afraid, and to implore help before the enemy could recruit his forces and gird himself for victory or revenge. For Civilis was marching against them with no contemptible force, as the most ardent of his cohorts, composed of Chauci¹ and Frisii, now stationed at Tolbiacum in the territory of the Colony, was still intact. He was turned back, however, by the disastrous intelligence that this cohort had been treacherously destroyed by the Agrippinensians, who had closed the doors upon the Germans when stupefied with wine and banqueting, and having set fire to the building had burnt them all to death. Cerialis at the same time marched swiftly to their relief.

Agrippinensians.

Civilis was beset also by a further fear that the 14th Legion, in combination with the British fleet, might harry the coast line of Batavia. But instead of that, the Legate Fabius Priscus took the Legion by land² to attack the Nervii and the Tungri, receiving the submission of both states, while his fleet was boldly attacked by the Canninefates, who sank or captured the greater number of the ships. They also defeated a large body of Nervii who volunteered to take up arms for Rome; while Classicus fought a

Civilis gains some successes.

¹ The mention of the Chauci shows how far into Germany the movement against Rome was penetrating. The Chauci were one of the most important and powerful of the German tribes, occupying the low country between the Ems (*Amisia*) and the Weser (*Visurgis*). They had evidently been dragged into

the war by the Frisii, who were their neighbours on the west.

² The legion would land at or near Boulogne; but instead of marching along the coast into Batavia as expected, it marched into the interior by the direct road leading from Boulogne to Cologne.

successful battle against some cavalry which Cerialis had sent on to Novaesium. These numerous though unimportant reverses did much to destroy the prestige of the recent victory of Cerialis.¹

Vitellius's
infant son
put to
death.

About this same time Mucianus ordered the son of Vitellius to be put to death, on the plea that there could be no enduring peace until the seeds of war had been destroyed.² Nor would he allow Antonius Primus to be admitted among Domitian's suite,³ being uneasy at that General's popularity with the army; while his haughtiness was such that he could brook no equal, much less a superior. So Antonius made his way out to Vespasian, who received him not unkindly, yet not in such a manner as he had hoped. For the Emperor was drawn in two ways: in one way by the great services of Antonius, whose generalship had undoubtedly brought the war to an end; in another by the letters of Mucianus. Others abused Antonius for his intractable and boastful temper, throwing in charges against his early life. Nor did he himself fail to provoke hostility by his arrogance, insisting overmuch upon his own deserts:—*The other Generals, he declared, knew nothing of war: Caecina was a captive well versed in surrenders.* Thus he gradually fell out of favour and was held of no account, though still treated outwardly as a friend.

Antonius
makes his
way out to
Vespasian.

Two
miraculous

During these months, while Vespasian was waiting 81

¹ The style of this chap. is peculiar. Instead of involved sentences containing many separate facts with various constructions under one principal verb, as we so often find in Tac., we have here twelve separate sentences, with no fewer than sixteen principal verbs between them, either entirely detached from one another, or loosely connected by such words as *sed, simul, atque, et, quoque, qui*, etc. A series of disjointed

sentences like this presents a formidable task to the translator.

² Tac. here indulges in a glaring confusion of metaphor: *ni semina belli restinxisset*. Mr. Fyfe translates 'until all the seeds of war were stamped out.' But this does not help the metaphor; you 'stamp out' fire: but you do not stamp out seeds.

³ *I.e.* to join his staff for the expedition against Civilis.

for the seasonal summer winds¹ and a tranquil sea, many wonders occurred which betokened the favour of heaven, and a certain goodwill on the part of the Gods towards Vespasian.

cures
effected by
Vespasian ;

A plebeian of Alexandria, well known to be suffering from disease of the eyes, threw himself down at the Emperor's feet and besought him, with much wailing, to heal his blindness, praying that he would deign to moisten his eyelids² and eyeballs with his spittle:³ having been moved thereto by the God Serapis,⁴ who is worshipped above all other Gods by that most superstitious of nations. Another man, with a diseased hand, by the same God's advice, implored the Emperor to trample⁵ on it with the sole of his foot. Vespasian at first laughed these petitions

he heals
a blind
man and a
diseased
hand.

¹ The words *statos aestivis flatibus dies* clearly refer to the Etesian winds which are mentioned by name in ii. 98. But those winds did not begin before about July 20, and blowing from the NW. were unfavourable for the voyage from Alexandria. The weather for which Vespasian was waiting must have been the ordinary fine sailing weather to be expected after the rising of the Pleiades in May. See Spooner's n. on this passage.

² The meaning of 'eyelids' for *genae* is established by a quotation from Ennius given by Festus as cited by Paulus: *Pandite sulti' genas et corde relinquite somnum*, and by Pliny, N. H. xi. 37, 57 (§ 156) *Graviores alitum inferiore gena convivent*.

³ So in the case of the miracle recorded in St. John ix. 6: 'He spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.' The uses of spittle, both in the ancient and the modern worlds, have been various; but its main function has been to serve as a protection against the evil eye (Pers. ii. 33); against diseases and magic spells (Tibull. i. 2, 54); and against the nemesis that follows on proud words (Juv. vii. 112 and Theocr. vi. 39). Holman, the blind traveller, tells how mothers in Russia, fearful of the evil eye, will request strangers, before

casting an eye upon their children, to spit three times on the ground (Roberts' *Oriental Illustrations of the Holy Scriptures*, p. 101). In India, a traveller tells us that evil spirits may be averted by spitting three times into a child's face. Mungo Park tells us how on one occasion a successful journey was assured by spitting three times upon a stone. It is probably a similar superstition which has prompted the pugilistic practice of spitting into the palms of the hands at the beginning of an encounter.

Oris excrementum, in place of the natural word for spittle (*saliva*) seems pedantic. So in Ann xvi. 4 *ut nulla oris aut narium excrementa viserentur*.

⁴ Among his other attributes (see n. on chap. 83) Serapis was a God of healing, and therefore identified by the Greeks with Asclepius (Roman *Aesculapius*).

⁵ It might plausibly be maintained that the treatment for the hand suggested to Vespasian was a form of massage. It appears that 'the beneficial effects of massage were well known' to the ancient Egyptians; 'the Westcar Papyrus states that when, under the IVth dynasty, a prince paid a visit to a famous physician, he found him having his feet and legs massaged' (Bridges's *Syrian Anatomy or The Book of Medicines*, 1913).

to scorn; but at last, when the men persisted—fearing on the one hand to be thought guilty of folly, and on the other being led by the men's entreaties, and the remarks of flatterers, to hope for some result—he ordered the opinion of the physicians to be taken as to whether such cases of blindness or debility could be cured by human help.

The doctors gave divers answers:—*The blind man's sight, they said, had not been destroyed, and would return if the things obstructing it were removed; in the other case the crooked limb might be made straight if healing methods were applied. Such perchance might be the will of the Gods; and the Emperor might have been chosen to be the divine instrument. And finally, if the cure were effected, Vespasian would gain all the credit of it; if it failed, the ridicule would fall upon the sufferers.*¹

And so Vespasian, thinking that everything was open to his good fortune, and that nothing was now incredible, put on a smiling face, and amid an eagerly expectant crowd did what had been asked of him. The hand immediately recovered its power, and the blind man saw once more. Both facts are attested at this day, when falsehood can bring no reward, by those who were present on the occasion.²

This incident caused Vespasian to form a more 82
serious³ desire to visit the sanctuary of the God, and

He has a
miraculous
vision in

¹ The carefully-balanced answers of the physicians afford an amusing model of courtly evasiveness; Tac. seems to have seen the humour of the thing. Spooner's note will bring comfort to believers in Christian science:—'It would seem from the opinions given by the experts that the cures were just of the kind that might have been brought about by an act of faith.'

² In the East divine and semi-divine kings were supposed to have the gift

of healing; hence the visit of Naaman the Syrian to the King of Israel (2 Kings v. 5-7).

³ The comm. find no further meaning for *altior* than 'greater.' But the word suggests something more than that. These miraculous occurrences made a deep impression on his mind, and he determined, with a more serious purpose, to consult the God. See n. below on chap. 86.

consult him about the fortunes of the Empire. Having ordered everyone to be excluded, he entered the Temple, and was attending to his devotions when he saw behind his back one of the principal men in Egypt, Basilides by name, whom he knew to be lying on a bed of sickness at several days' journey from Alexandria. He inquired of the priests whether Basilides had been in the temple on that day; he asked the persons about him whether he had been seen in the city; and finally sent off horsemen, who brought back word that at that moment Basilides had been eighty miles away. Thereupon Vespasian concluded that he had seen a divine vision, and that the name 'Basilides' afforded a clue to the answer¹ of the God.

the Temple
of Serapis.

83 No account of the origin of this God has ever been given by our writers.² The story of the Egyptian priests is that when the First of the Macedonian Ptolemies established his kingdom in Egypt, and was supplying the newly-built city of Alexandria with walls and temples and religious ordinances, a youth of exquisite beauty and of more than human stature appeared to him in the night, and bade him send his most trusty friends to Pontus, and bring from thence his image:—*So would his*

How that
God was
brought to
Egypt.

¹ Tac. uses the word *responsi* as if Vespasian had consulted the deity and received an answer in return.

² For the probable origin of the story which follows, see Spooner's interesting note. Serapis was an ancient Egyptian deity, whose worship in more recent times supplanted that of Osiris. It is true that the worship of Serapis, with that of Isis, was introduced into Greece in the time of the Ptolemies, and into Rome soon after; but the idea that it was introduced into Egypt from Sinope or any other Greek town, is absurd. The mention in chap. 84 of Memphis

as a seat of the worship of Isis suggests that the whole story may have arisen from the fact mentioned by Eustathius that there was a mountain near Memphis called Sinopium (Σινώμιον). The story has an obviously Greek origin; and it is probable that it may have found a place in Manetho's *History of Egypt*. Manetho was a priest of Heliopolis who lived in the reign of the first Ptolemy; he was the first Egyptian to write in Greek; and it would be an act of courtly flattery on his part to invent a Greek origin for an Egyptian divinity.

kingdom prosper, and the city which received the image become great and glorious. With that the youth was seen to rise into heaven in a blaze of fire.

Having seen a vision, Ptolemy I. sent an embassy to Sinope to demand the God's image.

Amazed at the prophecy and the marvel, Ptolemy disclosed his vision to the Egyptian priests whose business it is to interpret such matters. But as these men knew nothing of Pontus¹ or of foreign countries, the King inquired of the Athenian Timotheus, a member of the Eumolpid family whom he had brought from Eleusis to take charge of religious ceremonies, what this worship was, and who this Deity might be. Searching out persons who had travelled to Pontus, Timotheus learnt that there was a city there called Sinope, near which was a Temple of ancient fame among the inhabitants, sacred to Jupiter Dis, beside whose image there was also a female effigy which was commonly called Proserpine.

Further envoys sent to King Scydrthemis.

Ptolemy, however, who like other kings was easily moved to fear, but when his fears were removed, was more eager for pleasure than for religion, forgot about the matter by degrees, and turned his mind to other things, until the same form appeared to him, more fearsome and more urgent than before, threatening destruction to himself and to his kingdom if he did not do as commanded. Thereupon he ordered envoys with presents to be dispatched to Scydrthemis, who was King of Sinope at that time, instructing them, when they were on the point of departure, to go and consult the Pythian Apollo.² The seas were favourable, and the oracle returned no doubtful answer:—

¹ It is of course absurd to suppose that any Egyptian priests could have known nothing of Pontus. The Eumolpidae were an ancient priestly house in

Attica which supplied priests for the worship of Demeter at Eleusis.

² *I. e.* they were to consult the oracle at Delphi.

They were to go and carry off his father's image, but leave that of his sister¹ behind.

84 On arriving at Sinope, the envoys delivered the presents, with the petition and message of their King, to Scydrothemis. Scydrothemis was of double mind; at one moment he trembled at the divine wrath; at another, he was frightened by the threats and opposition of his people; he was much tempted also by the gifts and promises of the envoys.

Opposition
of the
people.

For three whole years Ptolemy urgently pressed his suit: he sent envoys of greater dignity, a greater number of ships, and more gold than before. Scydrothemis was then visited by a terrible apparition which bade him delay no longer the purposes of the God; and when he still hesitated, he was afflicted with various plagues and pestilences, and other signs of the divine wrath, which became more grievous every day. He then summoned an assembly, and told the people of the bidding of the God, of his own and Ptolemy's visions, and of the calamities with which they were threatened.

But the people would not listen to the King: jealous of Egypt, fearful for themselves, they beset the Temple. Then follows the extraordinary part² of the story. The God himself, unaided, stepped on to the ships, which had been brought close to shore; and, marvellous to relate, they arrived at Alexandria, across all that expanse of sea, upon the third day. A Temple befitting the grandeur of the city was built on a spot called Rhacotis,³ where had stood from ancient days a shrine to Serapis and Isis.

The God
at last
stepped on
board ship
of himself.

¹ Jupiter Dis (*Zeus χθόνιος*), the God of the World below, is thus identified with the Jupiter of heaven, so that Proserpine is sister to Apollo, both being children of Jupiter.

² It is quite possible (as Orelli thinks) that the words *maior fama* may mean 'the prevalent,' 'the more firmly established,' account.

³ Rhacotis was a suburb of Alex-

Other
accounts.

Such is the commonly received account of the origin and arrival of the God. I am aware that some say that he was brought from Seleucia, a city of Syria, in the reign of the Ptolemy who was Third of that name; others that he was brought over by this same Ptolemy from his seat at Memphis, a famous and ancient stronghold of the Egyptians. As to the God himself, many hold that he is Aesculapius, because he heals the sick; some that he is Osiris, the most ancient God of that country; many think that he is Jupiter, as being the sovereign ruler of all things; but most people hold him to be Father Dis, arguing either from his visible attributes, or from the hidden meaning which they attach to them.¹

Domitian
and Muci-
anus set
out for
the war.

Before reaching the Alps, Domitian and Mucianus 85 received the good news of what had happened in the country of the Treveri. Their best evidence of the victory was in the person of Valentinus, the enemy's General—his spirit unbroken, and with all the signs of his former high pretensions in his face. He was given a hearing—only to see what manner of man he was—and condemned to death. At the moment of his execution, some one taunted him with the subjugation of his country:—'*In death I shall find consolation,*' was his reply.

Valentinus
put to
death.

And now Mucianus disclosed, as if he had only just thought of it, an idea which he had long secretly entertained:—

Mucianus
dissuades
Domitian
from going
to the
front.

Seeing that by the blessing of the Gods, he said, the

andria adjoining the harbour. It is strange that Tac. should not have seen that the existence of an ancient temple of Serapis at Alexandria shows the absurdity of the fable just narrated.

¹ Serapis is represented with a three-headed dog and a serpent by his side, and a *modius* or bushel on his head.

The dog suggests the attribution to Dis, the serpent to Aesculapius. The phrase *per ambages* means exactly what we mean by 'symbolical'; but that word, with its modern associations, is just the kind of word which must be avoided by a translator of Tacitus.

enemy had been crushed, it would little become Domitian, when the war was well-nigh over, to come in upon a glory that was not his own. If the Empire itself, or the security of Gaul, had been in peril, a Caesar's place would have been on the field of battle; but the Canninefates and the Batavians must be left to lesser Generals. At Lyons, Domitian would be near enough to display Imperial authority and state: let him keep free from trivial risks, and reserve himself for greater matters.

86 The wiliness of this advice was apparent; but due deference¹ required that it should not be exposed. So they proceeded to Lyons, whence Domitian is believed to have sent emissaries to try the loyalty of Cerialis, and discover whether, in the event of his presenting himself to the army, that General would be disposed to hand over to him the command. Whether he did this with the idea of making war upon his father, or to provide himself with means and forces against his brother, remained uncertain; for Cerialis parried the proposal with excellent tact, treating it as an outburst of idle boyish vanity.

They reach Lyons.

Perceiving now that his elders looked down upon him for his youth, Domitian gave up even the lesser duties of government which he had hitherto performed. Assuming an air of simplicity and modesty, and retiring within himself,² he affected a taste for

Domitian gives up public duties.

¹ The phrase *pars obsequii* means that between Mucianus and Domitian there was a kind of official or court reserve, which prevented plain speaking on either side. Mucianus had put his suggestion into a complimentary form; it was *pars obsequii* on the part of Domitian—good manners or etiquette required—that he should meet the suggestion in a similar spirit. A bland proposal should be blandly received.

² The phrase *in altitudinem conditus*

throws light upon the *altior cupido* of Vespasian in chap. 82, line 1. See also Ann. iii. 44, where the unconcern of Tiberius at the revolt of Gaul is attributed to *altitudo animi*. Cp. also Sallust, Jug. 95 *ad simulanda negotia altitudo ingeni incredibilis*. In all these passages the idea is that of depth—of profound reserve—not of 'strength of mind' as I have wrongly translated it in Ann. iii. 44.

letters and for poetry, his object being to conceal his real mind, and withdraw himself from rivalry with his brother, whose gentle nature, so unlike his own, he entirely misunderstood.

BOOK V

I IN the beginning of this same year Titus Caesar was appointed by his father to complete the subjugation of Judaea.¹ He had enjoyed a high military reputation while his father and himself were still private persons; he now received a great accession of fame and importance, and was warmly welcomed by the armies and the Provinces. Anxious to prove himself more than equal to his high fortunes, he displayed both dignity and energy in the field, while by his friendliness and affability he called forth the willing service of his men, mixing constantly with the common soldiers on the march, or when engaged in labour, without any lowering of his dignity as General.

Titus is put in command of the Judæan war.

In Judaea he found three Legions²—the 5th, the 10th, and the 15th—all old soldiers of Vespasian. To

His forces.

¹ At the outbreak of the civil war, Vespasian had all but completed the conquest of Judaea (*trostigaverat bellum Iudaicum Vespasianus* ii. 4), and was thus able to rest upon his oars and watch the course of events in Italy. He had been sent out to be governor of Syria in A. D. 66; and during the years 67 and 68 he had reduced the whole of the open country. Nothing now remained but the capture of Jerusalem itself (see below, chap. 10). The civil war had made him pause for a while, not knowing for what purposes his Eastern army might be required. This respite filled the Jews with hope. They employed the time in adding to the defences of the city, and were thus able to offer that desperate resistance which provoked the exasperation of the con-

querors, and brought down upon the hapless city the most terrible of retributions. His own attention being turned elsewhere, Vespasian had handed over to Titus the best part of his army (*validissimam exercitus partem*, iv. 51) to complete the conquest.

² These three legions were the 5th (*Macedonica*) to be distinguished from the 5th (*Alauda*), so famous as part of the garrison of Vetera: the 10th (*Fretensis*), to be distinguished from the 10th (*Gemina*) which had remained in Spain, and taken no part in the civil war; and the 15th (*Apollinaris*), to be distinguished from the 15th (*Primigenia*) stationed at Vetera, which had sent detachments to join the invading force of Valens.

these he added the 12th¹ from Syria, and the 22nd and the 3rd brought up from Alexandria. He had also with him twenty cohorts of allied infantry, and eight wings of cavalry; the Kings Agrippa and Sohaemus, with the auxiliaries of King Antiochus;² a force of Arabs, who hated the Jews with all the bitterness usual between neighbours; as well as a number of persons who had been brought over from Italy by the hope which each cherished of gaining the first place in the as yet unoccupied affections of the Prince.

Such were the forces, in full martial array, with which Titus entered the enemy's country.³ Feeling his way before him, and ready for battle, he pitched his camp close to Jerusalem.

Having now to relate the end of a famous city, I 2
deem it fitting to recount its origin.⁴

¹ The name of the 12th was *Fulminata*; that of the 22nd *Deiotariana*; that of the 3rd *Cyrenaica*. There were two other legions called 3rd: the 3rd (*Augusta*), the single legion which held Africa, and the 3rd (*Gallica*), which had belonged to the Syrian army and had been transferred to Moesia in time to gain the victory over the Rhoxolani (i. 79). Only detachments of the 3rd and 22nd were given to Titus.

² Agrippa, Sohaemus, and Antiochus are all mentioned in ii. 81, as having joined the cause of Vespasian. See n. there. Agrippa was son of the Herod Agrippa, after whose death, as recorded in the Acts (xii. 20-24), Judaea was annexed again to Syria, and ruled by a procurator. In A.D. 48 this Agrippa, on the death of his uncle, had received from Claudius the kingdom of Chalcis; he had done his best to dissuade the Jews from rebelling. Sohaemus was king of Sophene, also of Emesa in Syria (Jos. Ant. xx. 8, 4), Antiochus of Com-magene and part of Cilicia.

³ As Tac. tells us in chap. 10 that Vespasian had already conquered all the open country, and all the cities of Judaea except Jerusalem, the *fines hostium* which Titus now entered can

only mean the position still occupied by the Jews, *i.e.* Jerusalem and its immediate neighbourhood.

⁴ It is not easy to discover the sources from which Tac. derived his knowledge of the origin and history of the Jews. He does not seem to have had any knowledge of Josephus; though the *Antiquities* were completed as early as 93 or 94 A.D. The *Judæan War* appeared some years earlier. He certainly never consulted the Septuagint. His account was perhaps gathered from the Egyptian priests—for he seems to have visited Egypt—but was more probably founded on the versions given to the stories of the priests by the learned Greeks of Alexandria. It has been conjectured that Chaere-mon, librarian of the Alexandrian library, who in the time of Nero wrote a history of Egypt, and Lysimachus, were among the authorities used. As it is clear that Tac. did not know of the history of Josephus, it is of importance to note how closely the facts which he gives as to Jerusalem and the siege, so far as they go, correspond with the authentic account of Josephus, while he carefully omits the exaggerations of the latter as to numbers. This circumstance is of the utmost value towards

The story goes that the Jews were fugitives from the island of Crete¹ who settled upon the extreme borders of Africa at the time when Saturn was forcibly driven from his kingdom by Jupiter. Evidence for this story is discovered in their name: the name of the *Idaei*, a tribe bordering on the famous Mount Ida in Crete, having been lengthened, by a foreign corruption, into the form 'Iudaei.' Some say that the superabundant population of Egypt was discharged into the bordering countries in the reign of Isis, under the leadership of Hierosolymus and Judas; many assert that the Jews were an Ethiopian race, driven out by fear or hatred to seek a new home in the reign of King Cepheus.²

Others relate that they were an interloping horde from Assyria, who being destitute of land took possession of part of Egypt, and then afterwards settled in towns and lands of their own in the Hebrew country on the borders of Syria.³

establishing the accuracy of Tac. as an historian, and the care which he took in consulting his authorities.

¹ The story that the Jews came from Crete is found in Tac. alone. A confusion may have arisen between the Jews and the Phoenicians or Philistines, who undoubtedly had a connexion with that island; while the fact that the Sabbath of the Jews was held on the day named after Saturnus (*dies Saturni*) would naturally lead to the invention of some connexion between the Jews and that deity. Crete was a centre round which the Greek mind loved to wind its legends; and modern archaeology, almost lifting the veil which has hitherto concealed from us the early history of the Eastern Mediterranean, has shown upon how firm a basis of power and civilisation these legends must have rested. The idea of any connexion between the words *Idaei* and *Iudaei* is altogether fanciful. Godley has the following note:—'The legend of Cronos' expulsion by Zeus seems to point to the superseding of an old by a

new religion: it may be supposed that Crete was the scene of an exceptionally violent collision between the rival cults. Tacitus is the only author who represents the *Idaei* as part of the population of Crete; elsewhere they are *δαίμονες* or *γενίαι*. See Plut. *de facie in orbe lunae*, 26, 12. Legends in general speak of them as attendants of Zeus, not of Cronos.'

² Cepheus, King of Ethiopia, is known in mythology as the husband of Cassiopeia and the father of Andromeda; all three were placed among the stars. Hor. alludes to Cepheus as *Andromedae pater* (Od. iii. 29, 17). The story of Andromeda, however, is usually connected with the town of Joppa; hence the tale told by Tac. is believed to be of Phoenician origin.

³ This tale has an inkling of the truth. A similar story is told by Justinus, who probably flourished in the time of the Antonines, and according to his own account copied Trogus Pompeius, an Augustan writer. Justin says the Jews came from Damascus, and originally

Others again give the Jews an illustrious origin, asserting that the Solymi,¹ a race celebrated in Homer's poems, called the city which they had built Hierosolyma,² after their own name.

Most writers agree in this, that in the reign of King Bocchoris³ a loathsome plague broke out in Egypt; and that when the King consulted the oracle of Hammon for a remedy, he was bidden to purge his kingdom, and to deport that tribe, as being hateful to the gods, to some other country.⁴ Hunted up and brought together, the multitude were left in the wilderness, where they were abandoning themselves to tears and torpor when they were warned by one of the exiles called Moyses not to look for help to either Gods or men—both of whom had deserted them—but to trust to themselves, under the heaven-sent leader who should be the first to help them out of their present troubles.⁵

Plague in Egypt; expulsion of the Jews.

3

from the Chaldees; he mentions also the names of Abraham, Israel, and Juda.

¹ The Solymi, mentioned by Homer in three places, are always treated with respect; in two of the passages, the epithet *κυβάλιμος* is attached to their name. According to Herodotus they were the original inhabitants of Lycia (i. 173). Their supposed connexion with the Jews, as Godley says, is due to an imaginary derivation of the name *Hierosolyma*. It is worth noting that among the five possible origins attributed in this chapter to the Jews, Tacitus, with all his contempt for that people, admits two of a highly distinguished character.

² The name of Jerusalem (Hebrew form *Yerushalem*) became Hellenised at an early period into the form *Ἱεροσόλυμα* or *Hierosolyma*, thus appearing as a neuter plural noun. It is thus used by Cicero, Tacitus, and other Latin writers. But Greek writers also used the shorter form *Solyma*, no doubt believing in the imaginary derivation from the Solymi of Homer. (See Dr. Smith's *Jerusalem*, vol. i. p. 262.) The name is certainly Semitic.

³ The reign of Bocchoris is far too recent a date for the Exodus; but it is the date given by the Alexandrine Lysimachus. Bocchoris belonged to the 24th Dynasty (B.C. 779-729); and it is thought that the Pharaoh of the Scripture was Merenptah (B.C. 1275) the successor of Rameses II. The Alexandrines, like ourselves till comparatively recent times, had little idea of the immense dates covered by Egyptian history, and the Greeks would be little ready to believe in an antiquity greater than their own.

⁴ The interesting account of the Exodus which is here given, so correct in essentials, seems to have been widely spread. Godley says: 'It appears to be based mainly on the narrative of Lysimachus Alexandrinus, a writer of the 2nd century B.C., whose relation is preserved by Josephus (c. Apion. i. 34); and the story coincides at different points with that given by Manetho (ap. Josephum et Theophilum), Chaeremon (ap. Josephum), Diodorus, Strabo, Trogius Pompeius, and Justin.'

⁵ I take this passage differently from most edd. Many see in the words of

This counsel they followed, and set forth blindly on their way as chance might take them. Now what they suffered from most was want of water; and they were lying not far from death's door, prostrate upon the plain, when a herd of wild asses moved from their feeding ground to a rock overshadowed by trees. Moyses followed them; and conjecturing from the grassy nature of the ground, he opened up an abundant supply of water. Thus relieved, the people pursued their march for six days¹ continuously; on the seventh, they took possession of lands on which, after expelling the inhabitants, they founded a city and a Temple.

The heaven-sent leader Moyses finds water for them.

4 To secure his hold over the nation for the future, Moyses instituted new religious observances, contrary to those of all other men. Everything which is sacred with us is profane with them; and again, they permit things which we regard as unclean.² In

He institutes for them new observances.

Moses an obscure suggestion as to the adoption by the Jews of monotheism in place of their previous Egyptian polytheism. This seems unnecessary. Tacitus has already stated in the clearest terms that the Jews recognised only one God; and the words relied on to bring out the above meaning (*ne quam deorum hominumve opem expectarent*) form a conventional phrase in constant use, with none but the vaguest meaning. Thus Otho's last words were *nam incursare deos vel homines eius est qui vivere velit* (ii. 47). The phrase 'Gods and men' is frequent enough in modern writings; and it is as unnecessary to find a theological meaning in it here as it would be to accuse the Archbishop of Canterbury of polytheism if he happened to write to the Bishop of St. Asaph that 'the fate of the Welsh Church was lying on the knees of the Gods.' Some edd. would have us interpret *dux caelestis* of the ass; but how could a herd of asses be so described? The *dux caelestis* is, of course, Moses himself. That is the character in which he appears throughout the book of Exodus, and in the traditions of the Jews; and never

did he assert himself more emphatically—too emphatically—as the heaven-born leader than in the moment of his discovery of the water. If we read with *M sibi met duce caelesti* the meaning will be 'to trust to themselves under a divine leader,' i.e. 'himself.' But the true reading is probably *duci*. Moses was not telling the people to trust in themselves, as distinguished from trusting in the Gods; he is urging them to trust in him, as a leader sent by heaven, and as one who has proved his capacity to save them. The tense of *populissent* is ambiguous; it may either mean, by Latin idiom, 'who should save them out of their miseries', referring to his finding of the water; but more probably it refers to what he had already done in successfully leading the people out of Egypt.

¹ It seems probable that the idea of the Jews having been six days in the wilderness, and occupying their own country on the seventh, may have arisen from a confusion with the Genesis account of the creation.

² The first part of this sentence refers mainly no doubt to the refusal of the

their most holy place they have consecrated an image of the animal¹ which guided them in their wanderings, and removed their thirst; they slay the ram, as if in derision of Hammon;² they sacrifice the ox because the Egyptians are worshippers of Apis;³ and they abstain from swine's flesh⁴ because they were once disfigured by a disease to which that animal is subject.

Their fasts
and their
sabbath.

Their frequent fasts bear witness even now to the long famine of their early days; and Jewish bread is still made without leaven as a sign of how they devoured their corn in haste.⁵ Their repose upon every seventh day they explain by saying that it was the seventh day that brought an end to their labours;⁶ afterwards, beguiled by the sweets of ease, they gave up to indolence every seventh year also.⁷ Others say

Jews to share in any religious rites but their own, or to worship images, especially that of the Emperor himself; the second mainly to their laws regarding marriage, which permitted that of uncle and niece, and enjoined that of a brother with a dead brother's widow.

¹ The origin of the idea that the Jews worshipped an ass has never been satisfactorily explained. The Christians, who were so generally confounded with the Jews, suffered equally from the imputation; it was a subject for common jibes against them, as proved by the *graffiti* found on old walls at Rome.

² The God Hammon (Ammon, Amon or Amun) identified by the Greeks with Zeus, and by the Romans with Jupiter, was represented with the horns of a ram.

³ Apis, who was worshipped at Memphis, was an incarnation of the God Ptah, who appeared from time to time in the form of a bull, and could be recognised by certain signs.

⁴ Cp. Juv. xiv. 98, *nec distare putant humana carne suillam*.

⁵ The meaning of *raptarum frugum* is not clear. The word *rapere* is no doubt often used of plundering, as in iii. 19 (*maiores rapiendi licentiam*) and in iv. 22 of the supplies of corn (*rapi permisere*). But it is also used of any rapid or violent action; and it is

tempting to explain it here as referring to the hurried eating, the snatched meal, which was commemorated in the Passover: 'Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it—for thou camest out of the land of Egypt in haste' (Deut. xvi. 3); 'And ye shall eat it in haste, it is the Lord's passover' (Exod. xii. 11).

⁶ These words—*septimo die otium placuisse ferunt quia is finem laborum tulerit*—have a curious resemblance to Genesis ii. 2: 'And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.' Cp. also Exodus xx. 11, from which the words of the fourth commandment are taken; it would almost seem as if they had been seen by, or quoted to, Tacitus.

⁷ The Sabbatical year was instituted for a real purpose, to let the land lie fallow: 'And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof; but the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still' (Exod. xxiii. 10, 11); and similarly in Lev. xxv. 4, 'But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land.' Tac. gives the ordinary Roman view: see Juvenal xiv. 105-6, *Sed pater in causa, cui septima quaeque fuit lux = Ignava, et partem vitae non attigit ullam*.

this was done in honour of Saturn : either because they received the elements of their faith from the Idaei, who we are told were driven forth with Saturn,¹ and became the founders of their race ; or because Saturn is the most potent of the seven stars which rule the affairs of men, and moves in the highest orbit, and because most of the heavenly bodies perform their functions² and their courses in multiples of seven.

5 These rites, whatever their origin may have been, are excused by their antiquity ; but their other practices, which are unclean and revolting, have been adopted out of sheer depravity. Their wealth³ has been built up out of tribute and contributions⁴ from the vilest of mankind, who have renounced the religion of

Their rites partly excusable, partly revolting.

¹ It is to be noted that Tac. seems here to adopt as his own the view that the Jews were sprung from Crete, although in chap. 2 he expresses no preference for any one of the five accounts of the Jewish origin over the others. This is analogous to his practice, noticed in the *Annals*, of mentioning some suspicion as a mere rumour, and then afterwards referring to it as a fact. He thus gains credit for impartiality in his first statement of the case, and then afterwards accepts as established the view to which he is most inclined himself.

² I retain the *vim* of M and adopt Wölfflin's reading *commeent* for the *commearent* of M, as involving the slightest change. F. reads *commeare*. To read *viam* for *vim*, followed by *cursum*, is tautologous. *Vim suam et cursum commeent* is a somewhat violent Zeugma, but not impossible. Halm's reading *compleant* gives a good and simple sense. If *commeare* be read with F., I would suggest that *feratur* does duty in two senses : first in the sense 'is borne along' ; and secondly in the sense 'is reported,' 'is said,' with *comeare*.

³ I take the passage which follows (*nam pessimus* down to *odium*) differently from other edd. *Nam*, as so often in Tac., does not give a logical reason, but only an instance of what has just been said—a confirmation of the writer's opinion. The first instance given of the *pravitas* of the Jews is that they acquired their

wealth from contributions from the vilest of mankind, *i.e.* their proselytes ; he then adds a second point, the point which the Romans most condemned in the Jews, *viz.*, their hostility to the whole human race, coupled with invincible loyalty to each other : *Romanas autem soliti contemnere leges = Iudaeum ediscunt et servant et metuunt ius* (Juv. xiv. 100-101). The words *et quia*, which have been misinterpreted, correspond to the *nam* at the beginning of the clause, introducing the second instance of *pravitas*. The exclusiveness, and the proselytism, of the Jews were the two points which most roused the Roman antipathy against them. Diodorus speaks of their being *μόνοως ἀπάντων ἔθνων ἀκοινωνήτους τῆς πρὸς ἄλλο ἔθνος ἐπιμειξίας* (xxxiv. 1) ; and in Ann. xv. 44 Tac. tells us that the Christians, whom he mixed up with the Jews as a whole, were condemned, not so much on the charge of having caused the burning of Rome, 'as for their hatred of the human race.' Horace speaks of their compulsory proselytising : *ac veluti te = Iudaei cogemus in hanc concedere turbam* (Sat. i. 4, 142-3.)

⁴ The sums collected for the Jewish Temple from foreign proselytes were immense. When Crassus was on his way to the disaster at Carrhae in B.C. 53 he is said to have plundered the Temple of the huge sum of 10,000 talents (= £2,000,000) derived from this source.

Their
hatred of
other men.

their own country. Compassionate and unflinchingly loyal to each other, they hate all other men with a deadly hatred. They take their meals apart; they sleep apart; and though as a race they are prone to lust, and deem nothing among themselves unlawful,¹ they have no intercourse with foreign women.

They practise circumcision to have a distinguishing mark from other nations. Their proselytes adopt the same practice; and indeed the first lesson which they learn is to despise the gods, to abjure their country, and to esteem parents, children, brothers, as of no account. Yet the Jews take thought for the increase of the race; they deem it wicked to slay any additional² infants born to them. The souls of those who have perished in battle or by torture they hold to be immortal: hence their passion for raising offspring, and their contempt of death.

They be-
lieve in only
one God.

They follow the Egyptian custom of burying³ their dead, in preference to that of burning them: their beliefs also as to the world below are the same as those of the Egyptians, though not as to things in heaven. The Egyptians worship many animals, some with composite forms:⁴ the Jews worship with the mind alone.⁵ They believe in only one God—a God supreme and everlasting, who may not be portrayed, and who will never die; and they deem it impious, out of

¹ A gross libel; having no foundation but the two marriage rules mentioned above on chap. 4.

² The word *agnatus* or *adgnatus* is not here used in its proper legal sense, of persons related to each other only on the father's side (as distinguished from *cognati*, relations on either side), but in a special sense (as in Germ. 19), of children born after the father had made his will, who according to Roman law might be exposed by the father. The verb *agnascor*, 'to be horn in addition

to', is so used by Cic. (*de Or. i. 57, 241*).

³ Some editors unnecessarily substitute *condire* for *condere*; *condere* is used for burial in contrast to cremation.

⁴ Thus Hammon had the head of a ram, Isis of a cow, Anubis of a dog.

⁵ So Juv. xiv. 97, *Nil præter nubes et caeli numen adorant*; so also Lucan ii. 592, *dedita sacris = Incerti Iudæa dei*. The absence of images led the Romans to conceive that the Jews worshipped an impalpable abstraction, without personality of its own.

mortal matter, to fashion effigies of Gods after the likeness of men. No images therefore are permitted in their cities, much less in their Temples; they bestow no such flattering distinction upon either Kings or Caesars.

There are some who have thought that because their priests sing to the accompaniment of flutes and cymbals, wearing chaplets of ivy, and because a golden vine was found within the Temple, the God whom they worship must be Father Liber, the conqueror of the East. But there is no resemblance between the rites of the two religions. Those ordained by Liber are festive and joyous; those of the Jews have neither charm nor dignity.

Meanness
of their
ritual.

6 The territory of the Jews is bounded on the East by Arabia, on the South by Egypt, by the sea and Phoenicia on the West; to the North, it has a wide outlook towards Syria.¹ The people are healthy and inured to toil. Rain is rare, and the soil is fertile: its products are like our own, but it grows palm trees² and balsam³ in addition. The palm is a tall and graceful tree, the balsam is a shrub; when its branches swell, the veins are slit open with a piece of stone or pottery, for the application of a sharp knife will cause them to shrivel up.⁴ The sap is in use among physicians.

Description
of their
country
and its
products.

¹ This is only a poetical way of saying that Judaea (by which Tac. means Palestine as a whole) extends far in a northerly direction to Syria.

² Part of the view which Moses beheld from the top of Mount Pisgah was 'The South, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar' (Deut. xxxiv. 3). Pliny speaks of the fame of Judaea for palms (N. H. xiii. 4, 6), and Hor. regards it as a sign of luxury and extravagance to be anointed *Herodis palmis pinguis*

(Epp. ii. 2, 184).

³ The highly-prized *Balsamodendron opobalsamum* is an Arabian shrub: Jos. says it came originally as a gift to Solomon from the Queen of Sheba. The unguent was made of an oleo-resin flowing from incisions in the bark; hence Virgil's *Quid tibi odorato referam sudantia ligno = Balsama?* (Geo. ii. 118-9).

⁴ Pliny tells the same story (N. H. xii. 25, 54). Under the Romans it became a valuable source of revenue.

Mount
Libanus
and the
Dead Sea.

The highest of their mountains is Mount Libanus,¹ on which, marvellous to tell, amid all that heat, shade and snow are never wanting; it feeds and sends forth the river Jordan. That river never reaches the sea: passing entire through one lake, and then a second, it finds no outlet from the third.² This lake has a vast³ circumference like a sea, but it is more salt in taste; it has a heavy odour which breeds pestilence among those who live near to it. No wind can stir it; no fish can live in it; no water-fowl frequent it. Its sluggish water supports what is cast upon it, as if it were solid ground; men's bodies are buoyed up by it whether they can swim or no.

The gather-
ing of
bitumen on
the Dead
Sea.

At certain seasons of the year this lake throws up bitumen, the mode of gathering which has been learnt, like other arts, from experience. The liquid is naturally dark in colour; if vinegar be thrown upon it, it congeals and comes to the surface. The workers then lay hold of it, and haul it on to the deck of a ship, after which it flows in of its own accord and fills the ship.⁴ The flow is then cut off; but that cannot be done either with brass or iron: it will only cease on the application of a cloth stained with menstruous blood.⁵

Such is the account of ancient authors; but those acquainted with the locality say that the masses of floating bitumen are pushed or pulled by hand to the shore; after a time, when dried by the heat of the ground and the rays of the sun, they are cut up, as

¹ It is the Antilibanus or interior chain of which Tac. here speaks, not the Libanus near the sea.

² The first Lake was known as the Waters of Merom: the second is the Lake of Gennesaret (otherwise the Sea of Galilee or of Tiberias); the third is the Dead Sea.

³ Not so very immense; rather more than 40 miles long, and 10 miles broad at the broadest.

⁴ These tales about the Dead Sea have truth in them; but they have all been exaggerated into the marvellous.

⁵ This fable is found both in Pliny and Josephus.

stone or timber might be, with wedges or with axes.

- 7 Not far from here lies a plain, which we are told was once fertile and the seat of mighty cities, until it was burnt up by lightning, traces of which are still to be seen in the torrid appearance of the soil, now destitute of all fertility.¹ For whatever grows there of itself, or is sown by hand, though it may develop into leaf, flower, or fruit in the usual way, becomes at last black and wasted, and crumbles as it were into dust.

Plain of Sodom and Gomorrah.

While granting that cities which once were famous may have been destroyed in this place by fire from heaven, I am yet of opinion that the soil is infected, and the surrounding atmosphere tainted, by exhalations from the lake, so that earth and air having become alike unwholesome, neither crops nor fruit can come to perfection.

The River Belus² flows into the Judæan sea. A kind of sand is collected about its mouth which is mixed with nitre, and then fused into glass. The extent of this beach is small; but the supplies it affords are inexhaustible.

- 8 Judæa is mostly inhabited in scattered villages; but there are towns also. Jerusalem is the capital, where there is a Temple of immense wealth. Within the first ring of fortifications is the city; then comes the royal palace; enclosed within the innermost ring is the Temple. None but Jews are admitted within its outer gates; from the inner threshold all are excluded save the priests. When the

Jerusalem and its Temple.

History of the Jews up

¹ These, of course, are the plains on which Sodom and Gomorrah stood.

² The river Belus (*Naamân*) is in the NW. of Palestine: it flows from the

Galilean highlands into the sea near Ptolemais (= *St. Jean d'Acree* or our *Acree*).

to the time
of Pompey.

Assyrians, the Medes, and the Persians ruled the East, the Jews were the most despised of the subject races;¹ when the Macedonians² became predominant, King Antiochus endeavoured to destroy their superstition and introduce the manners of the Greeks; but his attempts to improve that most uncivilised of nations were frustrated by the Parthian war³—the revolt of Arsaces having taken place at that time. Thereupon, as the Macedonians were weak, and the Parthians had not yet reached their full strength, while the Romans were still far away, they placed themselves under kings of their own.⁴ Driven out by the fickle populace, these Princes regained their sovereignty by force of arms; and while banishing citizens, destroying cities, murdering brothers, wives, and parents, and committing other atrocities usual with kings,⁵ they clung firmly to the national superstition, seeing that the honours of the priesthood afforded the surest basis for their power.⁶

¹ Tac. entirely overlooks the period of Jewish independence, and treats the Jews as having always been in subjection to one or other of the great Eastern monarchies. What he says about Antiochus IV., usually called Epiphanes (B.C. 176-164), is correct. It was his attempt to force Greek institutions upon the Jews, together with his desecration and destruction of the Temple, that drove the Maccabees and the people into revolt. It is an interesting fact that at that same time a body of Jews migrated all the way into China, where they settled and prospered, being well received by the Chinese.

² By 'the Macedonians' of course the Seleucid kings of Syria are meant—from Seleucus Nicator, B.C. 312, down to Antiochus Epiphanes, B.C. 164, in which year the Jews recovered their independence.

³ Tac. is wrong about the Parthians; the revolt of the Parthians took place about a hundred years before the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. Arsaces founded the Parthian Empire about B.C. 250, in the reign of Antiochus II.

⁴ The allusion here is to the rule of the Maccabees, the descendants of the heroic Judas Maccabæus who headed the revolt against Antiochus Epiphanes. The first of them to take the title of king was Aristobulus, the son of Hyrcanus, in B.C. 107.

⁵ The Maccabees fell, no doubt, as Spooner says, by reason of feuds among themselves. But those feuds were furiously backed by their respective factions, and the terrible conflicts which ensued were as much due to the *mobilitas vulgi* as to the fanatical violence with which the people clung to the observances of their religion—which is what Tac. means by *superstitio*.

⁶ These words show that Tac. was aware of the immense political importance of the high priesthood—the centre round which all Jewish politics turned. The Maccabean dynasty was broken up by the quarrels between Hyrcanus II. and Aristobulus II., which began after the death of their mother Alexandra, who had appointed Hyrcanus to the high priesthood. This

9 Gnaeus Pompeius was the first Roman to subdue the Jews,¹ and enter their Temple as a conqueror, from which time it became known that the shrine was empty,² containing no image of a God, and no sacred objects. The walls of the city were destroyed, but the Temple was left standing. During the Civil War, when the Eastern Provinces fell under the dominion of Antony, the Parthian king Pacorus³ took possession of Judaea. He was slain by Publius Ventidius,⁴ who drove the Parthians across the Euphrates while Gaius Sosius subdued the Jews. Antony handed over the kingdom to Herod; Augustus enlarged it when he became the victor. After Herod's death, a certain Simo⁵ assumed the royal

How Jerusalem fared under Pompey, Antony, the Parthians, and Herod;

caused a war between the brothers which was ended by the intervention of 'a new and fateful influence' in the person of Antipater, the Idumaeen, father of Herod the Great. 'The Roman sovereignty and the Idumaeen family remained the dominant factors in the history of the city up to the fall of the city in A.D. 70' (*Jerusalem*, vol. ii. p. 463).

¹ This was in the year B.C. 63, when Pompey, having finished the war with Mithradates, deposed Antiochus Asiaticus, and reduced Syria to a Roman province, turned his attention to Palestine.

² So Josephus says of the Holy of Holies, *ἔκειτο δὲ οὐδὲν ὄλως ἐν αὐτῷ.*

³ After the death of Caesar, Brutus and Cassius had not hesitated to traffic with the kings of Parthia. Q. Labienus, son of T. Labienus the famous captain of Caesar's Gallic Wars, had been sent to the court of Orodes as their emissary; and though the battle of Philippi (B.C. 42) put an end to his proposals for the time, he persuaded the Parthians, two years later, to send an army to invade Syria and Asia Minor under Pacorus, the king's son, and himself. The expedition met with much success; Pacorus handed over Judaea to Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus: but in the year following, when Antony was getting firmer in the saddle, he sent out an army under Ventidius Bassus against the invaders. Labienus was caught in

flight and put to death, and Pacorus was chased back to Parthia. Pacorus renewed his attempt in B.C. 38; but he was again defeated, and was himself slain in battle. It will be seen that Tac. throws into one the accounts of these two campaigns.

⁴ Ventidius was succeeded as Antony's lieutenant by Gaius Sosius, who was made Governor of Syria. Sosius again entered Judaea, having espoused the cause of Herod; after a severe struggle, he captured the city, put Antigonus, the last of the Hasmonean princes, to death, and left Herod in possession of the throne, without a rival.

⁵ Simo had been a slave of Herod's: a man of great strength, he had established himself as a leader of bandits in the hills to the N. of Jerusalem, and pretended to call himself king (*Jos. Ant. xvii. 10, 6*). Godley clearly explains the situation on the death of Herod:—'Augustus undertook to decide between the rivals who contended for the throne after Herod's death (B.C. 3). By the imperial arbitration, Herod's kingdom was divided between three of his thirteen children: Archelaus received Judaea, Idumaea and Samaria; his brother, Herod Antipas, Galilee and Peraea; his step-brother, Philip, the territory E. of the Jordan—Gaulonitis, Batanaea, Trachonitis, Ituraea, Auranitis. Nine years afterwards, Archelaus was deposed and

title without waiting for the Emperor's approval;¹ he was put to death by Quintilius Varus,² when governor of Syria; the people were repressed, and the kingdom was divided among the three sons of Herod.

under Ti-
berius,
Gaius, and
Claudius.

Quiet prevailed under Tiberius; but when Gaius Caesar ordered his image to be set up in their Temple,³ the people flew to arms. This rising was ended by the death of that Emperor; under Claudius, as the princes died, or were reduced in power, the province of Judaea was handed over to Roman Knights or freedmen, one of whom, Antonius Felix,⁴ a monster of cruelty and lust, exercised the powers of a king in the spirit of a slave. This man had married Drusilla,⁵ the granddaughter of Antony and Cleopatra; he was thus the grandson-in-law, as Claudius was the grandson, of the same Antony.⁶

banished by the Emperor, and Judaea and Samaria became temporarily a Roman province, governed by an imperial procurator.

¹ Herod had taken care never to make a mistake like this. Throughout his life he had skilfully secured the support of Rome; his energetic and fiery nature had devoted itself to a twofold policy, the inconsistencies of which involved him in perpetual difficulties. To secure the favour of Rome he had to be an ardent Romaniser, striving to inoculate the Jews with Roman habits and institutions; on the other hand, he appealed to the fanatical spirit of the people by maintaining the peculiarities and sanctities of the Jewish worship in all their rigour.

² This Quintilius Varus seems to have been the same as the P. Quintilius Varus who was destroyed with his three legions in the terrible German disaster of A.D. 9. See n. on Ann. i. 3.

³ This was in A.D. 40, when Petronius was governor of Syria. Gaius was murdered in the year following. On the death of Gaius, Herod Agrippa I. (grandson of Herod the Great), who was already tetrarch of four provinces, had Judaea and Samaria attached to his dominions by Claudius. He died A.D. 44, as related in the Acts (xii. 20-

23). Berenice (Hist. ii. 2) was one of his daughters. His young son (Herod Agrippa II.) succeeded only to his uncle's province of Chalcis; Judaea, Galilee and Samaria henceforth became part of the Roman province.

⁴ Antonius Felix was brother of Pallas, the favourite freedman of Claudius, of whose corrupt influence we hear so much in Ann. xi. and xii. They had both been freedmen of Antonia, the mother of Claudius; hence the name Antonius. Felix was appointed procurator of Judaea by Claudius, in what year is uncertain. From Ann. xii. 54 it appears that he and Ventidius Cumanus exercised joint authority, both being distinguished for violent and corrupt methods. St. Paul preached before Felix 'of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,' so that Felix 'trembled' and dismissed him for 'a convenient season' (Acts xxiv. 25). He was recalled by Nero, and succeeded by Porcius Festus.

⁵ He had carried off Drusilla, daughter of Agrippa I., from her husband; her mother (Cyprus, says Godley) must have been a daughter of Antony and Cleopatra. But this is not consistent with what Josephus says of the parentage of Cyprus (Ant. xviii. 5, 4).

⁶ Antonia, the mother of Claudius,

IO The Jews, however, endured with patience until Gessius Florus¹ became Procurator, under whom war broke out. Cestius Gallus, Legate of Syria, attempted to crush the rising; after fighting many battles, of which the majority were defeats, he died: whether it was from vexation or by a natural death. Nero then sent out Vespasian, who, helped by fame, fortune, and able officers, subdued all the open country within two² summers, and occupied every city except Jerusalem with his victorious troops. The year following was taken up with the Civil War, and passed in quiet so far as Judaea was concerned; but when peace had been established in Italy, and foreign affairs again received attention, it seemed intolerable that the Jews alone should have withheld submission. At the same time it was thought expedient that Titus should remain in command of the army in view of all the chances and possibilities of the new reign.

Defeat of
Cestius
Gallus.

Vespasian
appointed
for the war
by Nero.

II Having then, as above related, pitched his camp before the walls of Jerusalem, Titus drew out his Legions in battle order; the Jews formed up close to their walls, ready to venture further out should fortune favour, with a refuge secured to them in case of defeat. A body of horse with some light auxiliary cohorts was sent out against them; a doubtful engagement took place, and in the end the Jews retired. During the days following, they fought several actions before the gates, until at last, after continual losses, they were driven within the walls.

Titus en-
camps
outside the
walls,

The Romans now prepared for an assault. It and pre-
pares for an
assault.

being the daughter of Antony and Octavia.

¹ This man was a native of Clazomenae, succeeding Albinus (the successor of Festus) as procurator in A.D. 64. His extortion, cruelty, and tyranny ex-

ceeded anything that had been experienced before, and finally drove the whole people into rebellion.

² The two summers were those of A.D. 67 and 68.

seemed a poor thing to wait till the enemy should be starved out, and the men clamoured for the more perilous course, some moved by valour, the majority out of mere savagery and a lust for plunder. Titus himself had the vision of Rome before his eyes, with all its pleasures and glories, which seemed likely to be postponed if Jerusalem did not fall at once. But the city occupied a commanding site, and it had been strengthened by massive works which would have sufficed to protect a city on level ground. Two hills¹ of great height were enclosed within walls skilfully constructed with projecting and retreating angles, so that an attacking force would have its flanks exposed.² The summit was precipitous. The towers that had the benefit of the hill were only 60 feet high, while those on the slopes below rose to 120 feet, so that from a distance they presented the strange appearance of being all of the same height. The palace within was surrounded by other walls; and conspicuous over everything was the lofty tower which Herod had called 'Antonia'³ in honour of Mark Antony.

Formidable
character
of the for-
tifications.

¹ There is considerable doubt as to which are the two hills here meant by Tac. It is generally recognized that there were four separate heights included within the walls of Agrippa. (1) *Bezetha*, to the N. of the Temple height; (2) *The Temple height* itself (the so-called Mount Moriah); (3) the so-called *Sion*, on which was the palace of Herod, to the W. of the Temple height; (4) *Acra*, the position of which is disputed. Dr. G. A. Smith holds that it was to the S. of the Temple height, 'occupying the same site as the ancient Sion, above Gihon, or the Virgin's spring' (*Jerusalem*, vol. ii. p. 451). Spooner and other edd. follow those who place Acra to the N. of the Temple height; and as Titus was approaching Jerusalem from the N., they suppose Bezetha and Acra to be the two heights referred to. But I agree with Godley's view that the words *duos colles* give a general description of the city as a whole, of which

the two commanding heights of the Temple height itself, and the so-called Sion to the W. of it, are the two prominent features.

² 'Jerusalem at this period was fortified by three walls in all those parts where it was not surrounded by abrupt and impassable ravines: there it had but one. Not that these walls stood one within the other, each in a narrower circle running round the whole city, but each of the inner walls defended one of the several quarters into which the city was divided—or it might almost be said one of the separate cities.' Milman, *History of the Jews*, ii. p. 327.

³ This tower, built by Herod on the site of the fortress Baris, which had been the Acropolis of the Hasmonean princes, stood on a precipitous rock some 90 feet high, at the north-west corner of the Temple. Herod had called it Antonia in honour of Mark

12 The Temple itself was a kind of citadel,¹ with walls of its own more colossal than the rest; the very porticoes which surrounded it formed an admirable defensive outwork. There was a spring² which never ran dry; the hill was perforated with underground passages; there were tanks and reservoirs for storing rain-water. The singularity of their manners had led the founders to provide against constant wars; hence they had made every preparation for sieges, however long, and had learnt much from the terrible experience gained when the city was captured by Pompey.

The Temple itself a citadel, strongly fortified.

During the sordid³ Claudian era, the Jews had purchased the right of fortifying their city, and had constructed, in time of peace, walls suitable for war. Within was congregated a vast rabble, swollen by refugees from other cities that were captured, these being mostly men of desperate character, and conducting themselves in the most unruly manner.⁴

Antony. According to Josephus, it rose to a height of 40 cubits; and though itself in the form of a tower, it carried four other towers, three of them 50 cubits high, while one at the SE. corner, dominating the Temple, was 70 cubits high. The walls and towers defending Jerusalem itself were of the most formidable character. If Josephus is to be relied on—and little confidence as a rule can be placed in his estimates of numbers—there were no fewer than 164 towers in the walls of Jerusalem.

¹ The Temple itself was a fortress of immense strength. According to Josephus, it covered a square of a furlong on each side; there were walls within walls; some of them he puts at 300 cubits high. The surrounding porticoes and cloisters formed one set of defences, the Temple within another, and both could be held independently of each other, each having massive walls and gates of its own.

² The existence of a real spring inside the Temple area was certified by tradition or by prophecy; but there seem to have been no real foundations for the tradition. No such spring or well has

been discovered by modern exploration; and the fact that a complicated system of cisterns has been found beneath the Temple area seems to disprove it. There is also the fact that in case of failure of the cisterns, water was brought into the Temple by aqueduct (*Jerusalem*, vol. i. p. 85). A confusion has probably arisen from the existence of the remarkable intermittent spring called 'the Virgin's fountain,' in the Kidron valley. Hezekiah is said to have diverted the water of the Virgin's spring by a tunnel into a pool within the city (*Jerusalem*, vol. i. p. 81).

³ Alluding to the general system of corruption carried on during the reign of Claudius by the freedmen who controlled him. It was at that time that Agrippa had been allowed to extend the walls.

⁴ No words could more accurately describe the manner in which Jerusalem at the time preceding the siege had been filled up by desperate refugees from the cities which Vespasian's army had destroyed during the two previous years. The so-called 'Zealots' from

Three parties, and three leaders, inside the city.

There were three leaders, each with a force of his own. The outermost and largest circuit was defended by Simo; the middle city by John [also called Bargioras]: the Temple was firmly held by Eleazar. The larger numbers, and the better armed, were with John and Simo; Eleazar had the strongest position. But battle, treachery, and fires raged within; and a large quantity of corn was burnt. Soon afterwards, under the pretence of offering sacrifice, John sent men to slay Eleazar and his followers, and so gained possession of the Temple. Thus the city was divided between two hostile factions until the approach of the Romans and foreign war created peace between them.

Various prodigies.

Many prodigies had occurred, which this nation— 13
so prone to superstition,¹ so hostile to religious observances—will not permit to be expiated by either vows or victims. Hosts joining battle, with arms flashing, had been seen in the sky;² the Temple had been lighted up by flames bursting out of a cloud; the doors³ of the inner shrine had suddenly been

Galilee, the band of robbers and assassins from Idumaea, and men of reckless and marauding habits from every part of Judaea, passed into the unhappy Jerusalem at the very time when the Roman armies were approaching it, and made it a scene of faction, of robberies, of inhuman bigotry, of bloodthirsty violence and assassination, such as can hardly be paralleled in history. Simo of Gerasa, after some success against the Roman general Cestius, had established himself at the head of a band of brigand-patriots on the Dead Sea. Admitted into Jerusalem, he now occupied the outer city, the quarters of Acra (?) and Bezetha. He carried on an unflinching war against the infamous John of Gischala, head of the furious Zealots who occupied the Antonian tower and the outer portion of the hill of Moriah, not including the Inner Courts of the Temple. Eleazar, who was at the head of the true

patriotic war party, held the Inner Court of the Temple, including the Holy of Holies.

Tac.'s account of the situation is admirably correct. The only mistake he makes is in saying that John was the son of Gioras, and that probably is due to a mistake in the text. Josephus says that Simon, not John, was the son of Gioras.

¹ By *superstitio* Tac. seems to mean any form of religion not Roman, as in the phrase *externae superstitiones* (Ann. xi. 15), while *religiones* means religious observances in general. Hence the Jews, who would regard no observances but their own, are a race *religionibus adversa*.

² Josephus also mentions a great number of prodigies, B. Jud. vi. 5, 3.

³ This was the East gate of the Inner Temple, 70 feet high, which according to Josephus required ordinarily twenty men to move it.

thrown open, and a voice louder than the human was heard to say:—‘*The Gods are departing*’; and then came a mighty stir as they departed.¹

Some few regarded these things as betokening disaster; but the greater number put their faith in a prophecy of their ancient priestly writings, that at that very time the East would rise to power, and that men issuing from Judaea would become masters of the world.² These dark sayings had reference to Vespasian and Titus;³ but the multitude, led in true human fashion by their desires, took these mighty prognostications to themselves, nor did even their calamities open their eyes to the truth.

The total number of the besieged, we are told, of all ages and both sexes, was six hundred thousand.⁴ All bore arms that were able to carry them, the number offering themselves being out of all proportion to the whole; and the women were as determined as the men. If they were to be compelled to leave their country, death had fewer terrors for them than life.

Such was the nation, and such the city, which Titus now resolved to attack by earthworks and covered approaches, seeing that against so strong a position assaults and surprises were impracticable. Each

¹ This story is also given by Josephus. The idea would naturally be taken up by Romans, as it was an early Roman custom in besieging a city to invite the Gods to come out, promising that they would receive due attention in their adopted city. See Liv. v. 22.

² It is interesting to find the general expectation of a Messiah, to arise in the East as a ruler of the world, mentioned alike by Tac., Suet., and Josephus. The Roman writers naturally interpret it as applying to Vespasian; Josephus, who after the sparing of his life at Jotapata had become an enthusiastic and subservient adherent of Vespasian, does the same. Yet he declares that the oracle, as he calls it, was one of the

chief incitements which drove the Jews to war.

³ It is to be noted that Tac. states positively that the prodigies mentioned at the beginning of the chapter had actually occurred; while here he states no less positively that the prophecies about a ruler coming from the East had actually foretold the reign of Vespasian and Titus.

⁴ Tac. does not apparently feel very sure as to the number. Josephus gives the number of those slain during the siege at 1,100,000; but, as we have seen above, his numbers throughout are grossly exaggerated and indeed quite incredible.

Ominous
ancient
prophecy.

Number of
the be-
sieged.

Legion had its task allotted to it; and there was a cessation of fighting until all the devices for the siege of cities, whether in use among the ancients, or invented by modern ingenuity, could be got together.

Civilis at
Vetera.

To return now to Civilis. Having recruited his army in Germany¹ after his defeat in the country of the Treveri, he established himself at Vetera, both as a place of safety, and because he wished to raise the spirit of the barbarians by a recollection of the success which they had gained there. Cerialis followed him thither, with a force doubled by the arrival of the 2nd, 6th, and 14th Legions;² the auxiliary cohorts and cavalry, which had been sent for long before, had hurried up after the victory.

Both
generals
anxious for
battle.

Neither leader was inclined for delay, but they were kept apart by a level expanse of naturally marshy ground; besides which Civilis had constructed a dam projecting slantwise across the Rhine, so as to throw back the water and pour it upon the adjacent fields. Ground of this kind, under water of uncertain depth, was treacherous and unfavourable to our men; for the Roman soldier, with his heavy arms, was afraid to swim, while the Germans, being used to rivers, lightly³ armed, and of great stature, could keep themselves above water.

¹ By 'Germany' here Tac. means Germany as a whole, the Germany beyond the Rhine; not merely the two Roman provinces, for which the Plural *Germaniæ* is used.

² Five legions, as we have seen, had been sent from Italy over the Alpine passes to quell the revolt; but of these only the 21st (*Rapax*) was under Cerialis, the remainder were given to Annus Gallus for the reduction of the Upper Province. But Tac. tells us practically nothing of the successful operations in that quarter.

In addition to the 21st, Cerialis had

under him the remains of the four legions which he was relieving (the 1st, the 4th, the 16th, and 22nd); but as these last were mere skeletons, the addition of the 2nd (*Adiutrix*) from Italy, the 6th (*Victrix*) from Spain, and the 14th (*Gemina*) from Britain, would at least double his fighting force. Various auxiliary troops, of horse and foot, were added to the legionaries. M in this passage reads *decima tertia* instead of *sexta*. The 13th was certainly one of the legions which had been sent over the Alps (iv. 68).

³ This is explained by Ann. ii. 14,

15 The Batavians, accordingly, provoked a fight, and the bravest of our men took up the challenge; but as soon as men and horses began to sink in the deep morasses, they fell into confusion; while the Germans, knowing the shallows, moved rapidly about, and, avoiding mostly our front, came round upon the flank or rear. There was no hand-to-hand fighting, as in an infantry engagement; it was more like a battle at sea: the men floundering in the water, struggling with all their might to secure some firm foothold; the wounded and the unwounded, those who could swim and those who could not, wrestling with one another in mortal combat. The slaughter, however, was not in proportion to the confusion, for the Germans, not venturing to emerge from the marshes, returned to their camp.

The Batavians provoke a fight on marshy ground;

The result of the battle was to make both Generals eager, though for different reasons, to hurry on a decisive action. Civilis wished to press his advantage, Cerialis to wipe out his disgrace; the Germans were flushed with their success, the Romans goaded on by shame. The night was passed by the Germans in singing and shouting, by our men in wrath and threatenings.

Civilis has the advantage.

16 Next morning Cerialis formed his front with the cavalry and auxiliary forces; the Legions he placed in the second line, keeping a picked body under his own command for emergencies. Civilis arranged his men in column,¹ instead of in line, the Batavians and Cugerni being on the right, while

Next day both armies prepare for battle.

where Germanicus tells his troops *non lorica Germano, non galeam, ne scutum quidem ferro nervove firmata, sed viminum textus vel tenuis et fucatas colore tabulas.*

¹ The word *cuneus* means 'a wedge,' and its proper use was to denote a

body of men thin at the point, and broad at the rear, fitted to penetrate an enemy's line (Veget. iii. 19). But here and elsewhere Tac. uses it of a body of men drawn up in column as contrasted with formation in line.

Harangue
of Cerialis.

the Transrhenane tribes were on the left, near the river. The exhortations of the Generals were not addressed as harangues to their armies as a whole, but to each division as they rode up to it. Cerialis appealed to the ancient glory of the Roman name, to victories of former and of recent days, bidding them *destroy once for all a perfidious, cowardly, and beaten foe ; it was not a battle, but chastisement, that was needed. In the late fight, outnumbered as they were, they had routed the pick of the Germans : the remainder bore terror in their hearts, and wounds upon their backs.*

To each Legion in turn he addressed some appropriate incentive. The men of the 14th he styled, *The conquerors of Britain ;*¹ the 6th, *Had been the first to hail Galba as Emperor ;*² the 2nd, *Had now to fight their first battle, and to consecrate their standards and their eagle.*³ Then riding up to his German cohorts, he implored them, with outstretched hands, *To win back their own river bank and their own camp by the blood of the enemy.*

At this a shout of joy rose up from the entire army : some thirsting for battle after long peace,⁴ others wishing for peace because worn out with war, all looking for rewards and repose in the future.

Harangue
of Civilis.

Nor did Civilis array his line in silence. Calling 17
on that battlefield to bear witness to their valour, he told the Germans and the Batavians that :—

They were treading on the footprints of their own glory ; they were trampling upon the bones and the ashes of

¹ Alluding to the famous victorious march of the 14th under Suetonius Paulinus against Boudicca in A.D. 61 (Ann. xiv. 33-37), in recognition of which its title was amplified to *Gemina Martia Victrix*. For the movements of this legion, see Spooner's n. on ii. 11.

² It was the 6th legion (*Victrix*)

which had first saluted Galba as Emperor.

³ The 2nd legion (*Adiutrix*), having been recently enrolled (*e recens conscriptis secunda*, iv. 68) out of the fleet, had to win its spurs.

⁴ This would apply to the 2nd and the 6th, the two legions which had taken no part in recent wars.

the Legions. In whatever direction the Roman might turn his eyes, he could see nothing but captivity, slaughter, and every kind of calamity. Let them not be daunted by the varied fortunes of that battle with the Treveri. It was their own victory that had then stood in their way; they had let fall their arms, and encumbered their hands with booty. Since that day everything had gone well with them; everything adversely with the enemy. He had done all that skilful generalship could do in providing a battlefield of marshes familiar to themselves, of swamps that would be fatal to the enemy. The Rhine and the Gods of Germany were before their eyes; under their favour let them fight, remembering their wives, their fathers, and their father-land. That day would either be counted one of the most glorious in their annals, or be a day of shame for their descendants.

The Germans, after their wont, signified their approval of these words by leaping, and clashing their shields.¹ A discharge of stones, leaden balls, and other missiles began the battle. The enemy strove to lure our men into the marshes, but they were not to be tempted into them.

18 As the missiles became expended, the fight grew hotter, and the enemy made a determined advance. Their huge stature and enormous spears enabled them to lunge at our floundering and slipping soldiers without coming to close quarters, while at the same time a body of Bructeri swam over from the dam which I have already mentioned as having been carried out into the river. This caused a confusion, and the allied cohorts were beginning to give way when the Legions took up the fight, beat back the enemy's

The Germans are at last out-flanked and defeated.

¹ See Germ. II: *si displicuit sententia, fremitu aspernantur; sin placuit, frameas concutiant. Honoratissimum adensus genus est armis laudare.*

attack, and restored the battle. At this moment a Batavian deserter came up to Cerialis offering to conduct a force of cavalry round by the edge of the morass, and so take the enemy in the rear:—*There was firm ground there, he said, and the Cugerni, who were on guard at that side, were not on the alert.*

Two wings of cavalry, accordingly, were sent out with the deserter. This body surprised and outflanked the enemy; and no sooner did their shouts signify their success, than the Legions charged in front, and the Germans were driven back headlong to the Rhine. Had our fleet promptly followed up the enemy, the war would have been ended on that day; but the approach of night and a sudden downpour of rain prevented even the cavalry from pursuing.

Next day Cerialis dispatched the 14th Legion to 19
join Gallus Annius in the Upper Province, supplying their place with the 10th¹ from Spain. Civilis received reinforcements from the Chauca; but not venturing to defend the city of the Batavians,² he withdrew into the Island, taking with him such things as could be carried, and setting fire to the rest. For he knew that the Romans had no ships with which to make a bridge, and that their army could not cross the river in any other way.

Civilis
withdrew to
the Island,

¹ The 10th legion (*Gemina*) seems to have been summoned from Spain at the same time as the 6th.

² There is a difficulty in fixing the site of the town here called *oppidum Batavorum*, which may have been the same place as Batavodurum. The phrase *oppidum Batavorum* (like *oppidum Ubiorum* Ann. i. 36) would naturally mean the capital of the Batavians; and it would be natural to suppose that the Batavians would have their capital inside the *Insula*, that is, on the N. side of the *Vahalis* or *Waal*. But the next words tell us that Civilis,

unable to hold the town in question, crossed the river into the Island (*in insulam concessit*), showing that the town here spoken of must have been S. of the *Vahalis*, the southern branch of the Rhine. Henderson identifies Batavodurum with *Nymwegen* on the *Waal*, just below the point where the Rhine separates into its two branches; others put it at *Cleve*, a few miles above the bifurcation of the river, but not actually on its banks. Henderson suggests *Cleve* as the site of *oppidum Batavorum*.

He also destroyed the mole¹ constructed by Drusus Germanicus across the Rhine, the removal of which obstacle poured the full force of the current on to the Gallic side, and by thus as it were drawing off the water so narrowed the channel between Germany and the Island as to give them the appearance of one continuous country. Tutor also and Classicus crossed the Rhine with a hundred and thirteen Treveran Councillors, amongst whom was Alpinus Montanus, who, as I have already mentioned,² had been sent as an emissary into Gaul by Primus Antonius. Montanus was accompanied by his brother Decimus Alpinus, as well as by others who sought through pity or by presents to enlist auxiliaries among a people with such a thirst for danger.

and destroyed the dam across the Rhine.

20 And so far was the war from being now ended, that Civilis made a fourfold attack in one day upon the quarters of our Legions, and of our auxiliary horse and foot.³ The 10th Legion was attacked at

He makes a fourfold attack upon our quarters.

¹ This dam, begun by Drusus in B.C. 9 (*aggerem coercedo Rheno*) and completed by the year A.D. 58 by Paulinus Pompeius (Ann. xiii. 53), was one of the great engineering works which Roman commanders did not hesitate to undertake, using the labour of their soldiers, in time of peace, for important public works. This dam, as we see from what is said of it below, had a great strategic and political object. Artificially increasing the volume of the right-branch of the Rhine, and reducing that of the left branch, it practically annexed Batavia and the Low Countries to Gaul, and proclaimed that the Germans were to keep to their own or east side of the right-hand branch. A further great work contemplated in A.D. 58 was the making of a canal to connect the Saône with the Rhine, whereby one continuous waterway would be made from one end of Gaul to the other for the conveyance of troops and merchandise (Ann. xiii. 53). By destroying the dam of Drusus, Civilis once more separated Batavia from Gaul and thereby proclaimed its independence of Rome.

² *I.e.* in iii. 35 and iv. 31.

³ It is evident that some interval must have elapsed between the events recorded in the preceding chapters and those of chap. 20. Civilis had been driven across the Waal, and by the destruction of the mole had made that river into a more formidable obstacle to the Roman advance. Cerialis made no attempt to cross the river, and satisfied himself, it would seem, by establishing four camps or forts on the S. bank of the river. Two of these 'were Arenacum, given to the 10th legion, which perhaps was situated at Ryndern by Cleve, and Batavodurum, almost certainly at Nymwegen' (Henderson, p. 310). It was at this point that the Romans began to build a bridge across the Waal, for which the 10th were felling wood when attacked by Civilis. The auxiliary camps were at Grinnes and Vada, but these places cannot be identified. They were doubtless further down the river to the west. The Roman forces being thus separated and waiting on events, Civilis made a bold and a sudden dash across the

Arenacum ; the 2nd at Batavodurum, and the camp of the auxiliary horse and foot at Grinnes and Vada : Civilis dividing his forces in such a manner that his sister's son Verax, Classicus, Tutor, and himself, were each in command of a force of his own. It was not that he expected all these attacks to succeed ; but, *With many ventures, he thought, fortune might be favourable in one or other of them ; Cerialis was not over-cautious : hurrying hither and thither in response to various messages, he might perhaps be captured while passing from one place to another.*

The force which had been told off for the camp of the 10th thought it impracticable to attack a whole Legion ; but they fell upon a detachment which had quitted the camp and was engaged in felling wood, and killed the Prefect of the camp, five leading Centurions, and a few private soldiers ; the remainder found safety behind their entrenchments.

Meanwhile a body of Germans attempted to break up a bridge which was being constructed at Batavodurum ; but night interrupted an indecisive conflict.

Severe fight
at Grinnes
and Vada.

The camps at Grinnes and Vada¹ were in greater 21
danger, the latter attacked by Civilis, the former by Classicus. Nothing could stop their onset ; and many of our bravest men were slain, among them Briganticus, a commander of cavalry, of whose loyalty to us and feud with his uncle Civilis I have already spoken ; but when Cerialis himself came up with a picked body of horse, the fortune of the day was changed and the Germans were driven headlong into the river. While rallying his flying troops,

river, and attacked all four camps simultaneously.

¹ If we are to understand that these four attacks were made on the same day, it is evident that Vada and Grinnes

cannot have been very far down the river, as Cerialis had time to come up before the battle at those places was over.

Civilis was recognised and attacked with missiles; he abandoned his horse and swam across the river. Verax saved himself in a similar fashion; Tutor and Classicus were taken off in boats that put in for them. Here again the Roman fleet failed to do its part as ordered; ¹ partly from cowardice, partly because the crews had been dispersed for other military duties. Cerialis, indeed, gave too little time for the execution of his orders. He formed his plans rapidly and achieved notable results; but as fortune favoured him even when his strategy had been deficient, both his army and himself became indifferent to discipline.

Civilis in danger.

Failure of the Roman fleet.

Not many days after this he escaped the danger of capture, though not without disgrace.

22 He had gone to Novaesium and Bonn to inspect the winter-quarters ² which were being put up for the Legions, and was returning by water. Perceiving that his escort was in disorder, and that no proper watch was being kept, the Germans planned a surprise. Choosing a dark and cloudy night, they slipped down the river and entered the entrenchments unopposed. They then began the slaughter by a clever trick,

Cerialis narrowly escapes capture; many vessels lost.

¹ All through this campaign Tac. gives a poor account of the performances of the Roman fleet. He has already told us that had the Roman fleet come up at the end of the recent engagement, the war might have been brought to an end (chap. 18). The Roman crews were entirely outmatched by the Batavians on the water; and yet in chap. 23 Tac. speaks of the Roman fleet, though inferior in numbers, as being *usu remigum, gubernatorum arte, navium magnitudine potiozem*. They had certainly given little proof of their superiority in these respects.

² Thus the season was advancing into autumn; note the phrase *flexus autumni* in chap. 23. No precise indication is given as to the place where

the following incidents occurred. After the failure of Civilis' assault upon the four camps narrated in chaps. 20 and 21, Cerialis had gone to inspect the camps at Novaesium and Bonn. He was now returning to the front, proceeding himself by water—though occasionally, it would seem, sleeping on shore—and accompanied by an escort of troops who marched along the river bank. The words *prono amne rapti* imply that the Batavian fleet came down upon the Roman fleet from above. If so, they must have eluded the Roman fleet in their passage upwards, probably passing them in the darkness. Once more the Roman fleet showed itself incapable.

cutting the tent-ropes, and butchering the soldiers as they lay covered by their own tents. Another body attacked the ships, throwing grappling-irons on to them, and dragging them off by the stern. At first they proceeded silently, to elude notice: but once the slaughter was begun, they raised a hullabaloo to increase the alarm.

Roused from sleep by their wounds, the Roman soldiers sought for their arms and rushed along the camp-roads, some of them properly accoutred, the majority with garments wrapped round their shoulders, and with drawn swords in their hands. The General, half-asleep and almost naked, was only saved by a mistake of the enemy, who dragged off the Praetorian vessel,¹ which was distinguished by a flag, believing that he was on board of her; instead of which he had been passing the night elsewhere, in the company, it was believed, of a Ubian lady, called Claudia Sacrata.

Excuse of
the watch.

The watch excused their misconduct by throwing the discredit on the General, alleging that they had been ordered to keep silence so as not to disturb his repose:—*The bugle-calls² and watchwords having been intermitted for that reason, they had fallen asleep themselves.* The enemy sailed back in broad daylight with the captured vessels, dragging the Praetorian vessel up the river Lippe as a present to Velede.³

Civilis
holds a
review of
his fleet.

Civilis was now seized with a desire to show off 23
his fleet. Manning all his biremes, as well as the vessels

¹ The 'Praetorian vessel' was the flag-ship of the admiral, after the analogy of the *Praetorium*, the general's headquarters in a camp.

² This probably refers to the bugle-calls between each watch. In Ann. xv. 30 it is mentioned how in a Roman camp each watch was announced by

a centurion, while the close of the dinner hour (no doubt its beginning also) was notified by a bugle.

³ That the Batavians could calmly tow this galley up the Rhine, and then up the Lippe, would seem to show that they could flout the Roman flotilla, and had complete command of the Rhine.

with one bank of oars, to these he added a large number of sailing boats, with crews of from thirty to forty apiece—the usual complement¹ for Liburnian galleys—while the captured ships were gaily rigged out with many-coloured plaids² in lieu of sails. The place chosen was a wide expanse of water like a sea at the mouth of the Meuse, where that stream carries off the waters of the Rhine into the Ocean.³ The object of this demonstration, besides flattering the national vanity, was to create such a terror as might serve to cut off the supplies coming in from Gaul.

More astonished than alarmed, Cerialis drew out his own fleet into line; though inferior in numbers, it had the advantage in size, as well as having better trained crews and more skilful steersmen. The Romans had the current with them, the enemy used their sails; in this fashion the two fleets passed

The two
fleets pass
one another
without
fighting.

¹ The verb here is doubtful. M has *serunt*, indistinctly; the more natural reading for the doubtful word would be the Bipontine *ferentium*. F. reads *ferunt*, which, though spasmodic, is perhaps not too much so for Tacitus.

² These striped plaids worn by Gallic chiefs were the natural ancestors of the Highland tartans. Caecina had given offence by wearing one of them on his entry into Italy (ii. 20), as also the 'barbarian covering of trowsers' (*bracas barbarum tegmen*). The modern Highlander thinks it strange that trousers should have been regarded as a distinctively Celtic dress, forgetting that the kilt was an ancient Italian garb, being the dress of the Roman soldier. His own kilt was a development of the *versicolor sagum* or tartan plaid, which was originally a single garment, covering the entire body, one end being wrapped round the legs, the other round the shoulders. It was in comparatively recent times that the two portions of the plaid were separated from each other, the kilt thus coming into existence as a separate garment.

³ The Maas or Meuse discharges it-

self into the Vahalis not far from the W. end of the *Insula Batavorum*. The topography of Tac. is often assailed; but nothing can be better than the account which he gives elsewhere of the Batavian island, and of the loss of glory which the Rhine suffers as it nears the sea: 'For the river Rhine, which down to this point flows in a single channel, broken only by small islands, separates as it were into two rivers at the beginning of the Batavian territory. The branch which skirts the German bank preserves its name, and its rapidity of current, until it mingles with the ocean; that on the Gallic side, which is broader and more sluggish, has its name changed to "Vahalis" by the inhabitants. Lower down it changes its name again for that of the Meuse, and discharges itself by the vast mouth of that river into the same ocean' (Ann. ii. 6). (See n. on iv. 12.) It was this same 'vast mouth' which was the scene of the naval review of Civilis. At that point, above Rotterdam, the Meuse and the Lek combined have a width of about 5 miles.

each other, and, after some discharge of light missiles, parted company.¹

Civilis retreats across the Rhine.

Civilis retreated across the Rhine² without making any further attempt; Cerialis mercilessly ravaged the Batavian Island, sparing however, by a policy well understood by Generals, the lands and houses of Civilis.³

Meantime the season turned to autumn; the river, fed by the heavy equinoctial rains, overflowed its banks, and flooded the low-lying marshy island till it assumed the aspect of a lake. Both ships and supplies were wanting; and the camp, situated upon low ground, was swept by the violence of the current.⁴

Boast of Civilis;

Civilis afterwards claimed that at that moment he could have destroyed the Legions, as the Germans desired him to do, had he not craftily turned them from their purpose.⁵ Nor does this seem far from the

24

¹ The account of these final naval operations is confused. Why were the Roman ships going down the river towards the sea? Why were they not attacked by the Batavian fleet which always had the best of an encounter? For the Romans to be passing seawards, thus giving the enemy the advantage of the current to come down upon them, would seem to be courting destruction. And how can this parade be described as 'the last great engagement of the war' (Henderson, p. 313)?

² This, of course, must mean the northern branch of the Rhine. Thus Civilis crossed over into Germany, leaving the Insula. The naval review of Civilis had taken place on the open mouth of the Maas, into which the Lek pours itself; and the fact that the Roman fleet pursued the enemy so far seems inconsistent with what we are told of the inefficiency of that fleet, as well as with the opening words of the next chapter. In any case it appears that Civilis retreated over the Rhine, leaving the Insula at the mercy of Cerialis.

³ The comm. quote the famous instance of how the Spartan invaders of

Attica spared the estates of Pericles at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War, to create a feeling against him (Thuc. ii. 13).

⁴ Henderson well points out that all through this campaign the Rhine fought for the insurgents. The Romans were as much hampered now by the high waters of the river as they had been hindered by the want of water in the preceding summer (*tamquam nos amnes quoque et vetera imperii munimenta desererent*, iv. 26).

⁵ The sudden collapse and surrender of Civilis, at the very moment when, according to Tac., he was master of the situation, is not easy to explain. The only explanation suggested by the narrative before us is that the mingled body of the followers of Civilis were beginning to feel doubtful of their cause, and preparing to turn an ear to the Roman suggestions for his betrayal. The Gauls, it was clear, could no longer offer assistance; the idea of a 'Gallic Empire,' never warmly accepted by Civilis, had now been blown into the air; to carry on a defensive war against Rome, inside the limits of Batavia, was no longer possible; and Civilis judged, with justice, that his best chance was to

truth, seeing that his submission followed a few days afterwards. For Cerialis had sent out secret envoys with offers of peace to the Batavians, and of pardon to Civilis; while he advised Velea and her kin,

To render a timely service to the Roman people, instead of trying the fortune of a war which had brought them so many disasters. The Treveri had been crushed, the Ubii had submitted, the Batavians had lost their country; wounds, flight, and mourning were all they had gained from the friendship of Civilis. Civilis himself, an exile and an alien, would be a burden to those who took him in. They had erred enough in crossing the Rhine so often; if they ventured on any further movement, the wrong and the guilt would be theirs, the Gods and vengeance would be with Rome.

Cerialis offers him peace.

25 This mixture of threats and promises broke down the fidelity of the Transrhenane tribes; questionings arose among the Batavians also:—

The Batavians weary of the war.

It was time to bring ruin to an end;¹ no single nation could free the whole world from slavery. What had fire and the sword accomplished against the Legions save to bring more Legions, and stronger Legions, into the field? If it was for Vespasian that they had been fighting, Vespasian was now master of the world; if they were challenging the Roman people in arms, what fraction of the human race were the Batavians? Let them consider the burdens borne by the Raetians, the Noricans, and other allied nations: whereas they had no tribute imposed on them save that of their valour and their men. That was next door to freedom; and if they must needs make choice of masters, better submit to Roman Caesars than to German women!

make terms 'at once with the Romans rather than drive them to exasperation.

¹ To 'prolong ruin' (*ruinam pro-*

rogare) sounds like a paradox; but *ruina* denotes the process of falling down, not the accomplished result.

So spake the multitude; the nobles were still more violent:—

It was the madness of Civilis that had driven them into war; he had put the existence of his country to the hazard¹ for his own private wrongs. It was the wrath of the Gods against the Batavians that had made them besiege Legions, slay their Legates, and enter on a war which had been necessary for one man, but fatal to themselves. If they did not recover their senses now, and proclaim their penitence by punishing the guilty man, all was over with them.

Civilis meets Cerialis upon a bridge;

Civilis was not blind to this turn of feeling, and he 26 resolved to be beforehand with it: not merely because he was sickened with misfortune, but also from that love of life which has broken down so many noble spirits.² He demanded a conference; a bridge over the river Nabalía³ was cut through, and the two Generals advanced to the broken ends. Civilis thus began:—

and expresses respect for Vespasian.

'If I were defending myself before a Legate of Vitellius, my acts would deserve no pardon, my words no credit. All was enmity between us. He began the war; I enlarged its scope. Vespasian I have long respected: we bore the name of friends⁴ when he was still a private citizen.

¹ The meaning usually given here is not very satisfactory. 'He had opposed (*i.e.* placed in opposition) the destruction of the nation to his own family misfortunes.' How the destruction of the nation could be regarded as a means of defending his family fortunes is not evident. I am inclined to think that *oppono* is used in the sense of 'to pledge, to stake, to set one thing opposite to another,' and that the meaning is, 'he had staked, or risked, the destruction of the nation against his own private misfortunes'; *i.e.* he had risked the destruction of the state for the sake of his private interests. Even so the expression is illogical: for the thing risked or staked would not be the ill fortune, but the good fortune, of

his house.

² So of Maroboduus, King of the Marcomanni, Tacitus declares that a too great love of living cost him his reputation: *consenuitque multum imminuta claritate ob nimiam vivendi cupidinem* (Ann. ii. 63).

³ Alike the name and site of this river are unknown. The edd. generally suppose it must have been one or other of the branches of the Rhine—or perhaps the Yssel. But it is more likely that a small stream was chosen for the purpose. In any case the bridge would probably be a bridge of boats which could readily be opened up in the middle.

⁴ Civilis may have become acquainted

*This was well known to Primus Antonius, whose letters drove me to arms in order to prevent the Legions of Germany and the youth of Gaul from crossing the Alps. What Antonius urged by letter, Hordeonius Flaccus pressed on me by word of mouth. The cause for which I fought in Germany was that for which Mucianus fought in Syria, Aponius in Moesia, Flavianus in Pannonia.' . . .*¹

with Vespasian when the latter was serving in Britain and conquering the Isle of Wight in the reign of Claudius.

¹ Here, unhappily, breaks off the great work of the *Histories*. We do not know the details of the work of pacification which followed upon the banks of the Rhine, and among the recently insurgent tribes of Gaul. The Roman armies had suffered severely both in life and honour; and we should not have been surprised to hear that some vengeance had been taken. But as citizens of an Empire which has known how to be generous in victory, we can rejoice

to learn that 'The great mutiny left no heritage of ill-will behind it to any generation. The German tribes upon the Roman bank joined with Rome's troops upon the river in accepting loyally and placidly her sway. Rome was always truly victor because she knew how to use victory well. Where she conquered she civilised' (Henderson, *Civil War*, pp. 332-3). And the one great practical lesson which she learnt from the rising of Civilis was no longer to quarter her legions in the countries from which they had been recruited.

APPENDIX I.

(Where the line of a reference is given, the reference is to Mr. Fisher's text.)

THE following examples will serve to illustrate what is said on pp. ix to xiii of the Preface as to those points of style which require the translator of Tacitus to make changes in his construction, or his order, or in the composition of his sentences, if he is to follow the natural usages of the English language.

(a) Cases where the construction of a sentence should be altered so as to preserve the order, occur on almost every page of the Histories. In translating the sentence *Judaicum exercitum Vespasianus, Syriae legiones Mucianus sacramento Othonis adegere* (i. 76, 13), natural English would require that the 'Judaean army' and the 'legions' should be made into Subjects, and the Transitive verb *adegere* changed into a Passive. Conversely, in translating *cum repente novo auxilio fortuna pugnae mutatur* (iv. 33, 12-13), the Ablative *novo auxilio* would naturally become the Subject of the English sentence, and the Passive Latin verb be changed into an Active verb in the English.

(b) Such sudden changes of Subject as the following cannot be endured in English: *Reliquae (naves) in litore captae (sunt), aut nimio ruentium onere pressas mare hausit* (iii. 77, 12-13); or again, *nam nec tributis contemnuntur nec publicanus atterit* (Germ. 29, 6); while in iv. 80, 6, 7 the two verbs *excipitur* and *tradebatur*, coming close to one another, refer to different Subjects—the former verb referring to Antonius, the latter to Vespasian.

(c) Instances already given above will show that the Latin Active may often be better rendered by an English Passive, and *vice versâ*. In the passage *Terret solitudo et tacentes loci* (iii. 84, 23), the emphasis suggests that the Latin *terret* should be changed into an English Passive, with Vitellius as a Subject. Similarly, in the passage *Igitur vagos et incuriosos tertia legio adiunctis auxiliis repente invasit* (i. 79, 5) English would certainly

demand that the order of the original should be adhered to, and the verb changed into the Passive; and not less certainly the verbs *ornarent* and *augerent* should be translated by Passives in iii. 72, 17.

On the other hand, both order and emphasis require that in iv. 54, 10-11 (*Fatali nunc igne signum caelestis irae datum*) the Ablative *igne* should be made the Subject of the English sentence, and with an Active verb to represent *datum*; while in iv. 36, 4 (*Sed miles secundis adversisque perinde in exitium ducum accendebatur*) there can be little doubt that the English Subject should be found in *secundis adversisque*.

(d) Though as a rule the greatest attention should be paid to the order of Tacitus, there are many passages in which his order can scarcely be followed in the English, as in ii. 22, 47.

Ingerunt desuper Othoniani pila librato magis et certo ictu adversus temere subeuntes cohortes Germanorum cantu truci et more patrio nudis corporibus super humeros scuta quatientium.

The order in iii. 7, 6-10 would be equally unnatural in English:

Desiderata diu res interpretatione gloriaque in maius accipitur, postquam Galbae imagines discordia temporum subversas in omnibus municipiis recoli iussit Antonius, decorum pro causa ratus, si placere Galbae principatus et partes revirescere crederentur.

(e) A good instance of a complicated Tacitean sentence is to be found in iv. 38, 4-11:

Is praeerat provinciae, nequaquam turbidus ingenio: sed quia naves saevitia hiemis prohibebantur, vulgus alimenta in dies mercari solitum, cui una ex re publica annonae cura, clausum litus, retineri commeatus, dum timet, credebat, audentibus famam Vitellianis, qui studium partium nondum posuerant, ne victoribus quidem ingrato rumore, quorum cupiditates externis quoque bellis inexplebiles nulla umquam civilis victoria satiavit.

Similar passages are to be found in iii. 43, 3-9; and again in iv. 13, 6-12:

Sed Civilis ultra quam barbaris solitum ingenio sollers et Sertorium se aut Annibalem ferens simili oris dehonestamento, ne ut hosti obviam iretur, si a populo Romano palam descivisset, Vespasiani amicitiam studiumque partium praetendit, missis sane ad eum Primi Antonii litteris, quibus avertere accita Vitellio auxilia et tumultus Germanici specie retentare legiones iubebatur.

Yet Tacitus can be simple enough when he chooses. When

he records prodigies, or narrates miraculous occurrences like the cures effected by Vespasian (iv. 81), or his vision of the God Serapis (iv. 82), or the miraculous emigration of that God to Egypt (iv. 83-4), he writes with a naïveté not unworthy of the Father of history.

(f) Instances of a string of miscellaneous Subjects, hardly connected with each other, are to be found in iv. 26, 1-6 :

Sed discordes animos multa efferabant: inopia stipendii frumentique et simul dilectum tributaque Galliae aspernantes, Rhenus incognita illi caelo siccitate vix navium patiens, arti commeatu, dispositae per omnem ripam stationes quae Germanos vado arcerent, eademque de causa minus frugum et plures qui consumerent.

Also in iii. 30, 1-6 :

Ac rursus nova laborum facies: ardua urbis moenia, saxaeae turres, ferrati portarum obices, vibrans tela miles, frequens obstrictusque Vitellianis partibus Cremonensis populus, magna pars Italiae stato in eosdem dies mercatu congregata, quod defensoribus auxilium ob multitudinem, oppugnantibus incitamentum ob praedam erat.

(g) In the following we have a series of short detached statements, each with the Substantive verb understood, without any attempt being made to combine them into a connected whole :

Comitatae profugos liberos matres, secutae maritos in exilia coniuges: propinqui audentes, constantes generi, contumax etiam adversus tormenta servorum fides; supremae clarorum virorum necessitates, ipsa necessitas fortiter tolerata et laudatis antiquorum mortibus pares exitus (i. 3, 2-6).

(h) A good example of a cumbrous Tacitean period, which would have to be broken up into several independent sentences in order to make reasonably smooth English, is to be found in ii. 92, 4-11 :

Munia imperii Caecina ac Valens obibant, olim anxii odiis, quae bello et castris male dissimulata pravitas amicorum et fecunda gignendis inimicitiis civitas auxerat, dum ambitu comitatu et immensis salutantium agminibus contendunt comparanturque, variis in hunc aut illum Vitellii inclinationibus, nec umquam satis fida potentia, ubi nimia est, simul ipsum Vitellium, subitis offensis aut intempestivis blanditiis mutabilem, contemnebant metuebantque.

On the other hand, the passage in i. 83, 1-8 is an instance of a long and smooth period, which can be turned into natural English almost as it is, with scarcely any change of order or construction.

APPENDIX II.

ON THE FIRST BATTLE OF BEDRIACUM.

I REGRET that I am unable to accept the view of the Battle of Bedriacum put forward with much military authority by Mr. Henderson (*Civil War and Rebellion, etc.*, pp. 114-124). The matter has been excellently dealt with by Dr. E. G. Hardy, both in an Appendix to chap. ii. of his *Studies in Roman History* (Second Series), and also in the *Journal of Philology*, vol. xxxi. No. 61 (1908), with whose statement of the case I almost entirely agree.

Mr. Henderson has persuaded himself—on what evidence is not very apparent—that Otho was a great strategist; and he supposes that Otho conceived the brilliant strategic idea of ‘enveloping’ the whole Vitellian army, which was then firmly posted at Cremona, by means of ‘a flank march directed past that city, in the immediate proximity of the enemy,’ and having for its objective a point at the junction of the Adda with the Po some miles to the west of Cremona. That plan would entail a march of twenty-nine miles from Bedriacum, that town being twenty-two miles to the east of Cremona, while the mouth of the Adda was seven miles to the west of it. The Othonian army was to advance along the Postumian road until it came near to Cremona; it was then to swerve by a circling movement to the right, and, having given a sufficiently wide berth to the city on the left, march on unmolested to the mouth of the Adda.

Meanwhile the Pannonian and Moesian reinforcements, coming up from Aquileia, were to occupy Bedriacum in force, so that, if the plan succeeded, and the larger Vitellian army in Cremona made no attempt to interfere with the flanking movement, the Vitellians would be held up by an army on each side of them, as

well as cut off from the third army which was coming up behind from Gaul under Vitellius himself.

But all the essential conditions for the success of such a movement were wanting. A flank march, always a dangerous operation, is doubly dangerous if it be made with inferior numbers ; in this case, the flanking army, having a long and difficult march to execute, would be endeavouring to pass under the very nose of an army more than twice its superior in point of numbers, and holding a secure position on its flank. Dr. Hardy shows (on Mr. Henderson's own figures) that counting the troops left at Bedriacum and those taken by Otho himself to Brixellum, the whole army available for the march could not have been more than some 25,000 men. The Vitellian army probably numbered twice that amount ; and it is unreasonable to suppose that so large a force would have remained quiescent in the city, and suffered the smaller army to pass by unchallenged.

Secondly, if the Vitellian army was to be 'enveloped,' it was essential that Bedriacum on the one side should be held as strongly as the post on the Adda on the other. For that purpose the reinforcing legions from the Danubian armies should have been ready to occupy Bedriacum simultaneously with its evacuation by Otho's troops. But the only troops from the Danubian armies which had already arrived were the 13th legion, half the 14th, and perhaps some auxiliaries ; and there is no evidence to show that any of the further reinforcements expected from that army had got even as far as Aquileia. The whole point of the advice given by Suetonius at the Council of War was that all action should be delayed till those reinforcements should arrive ; and that advice had been summarily rejected.

Our two great authorities, Tacitus and Plutarch, give no hint of this plan. Their accounts agree as to all the main features of the battle ; their differences are quite unimportant. The Othonian army set out from Bedriacum and marched four miles—Plutarch says six miles—on the first day before camping. Next day they marched out, aiming apparently at some point on the river near Cremona, and were encountered some four miles outside the city—exactly where the experienced Suetonius had prophesied that they would be encountered—by the whole Vitellian forces. Thus after a march of some twelve, or possibly

sixteen miles, the inferior forces of Otho were attacked by a vastly superior enemy coming out fresh to the encounter; there could be but one end to a battle forced on under such conditions.

There is but one peg on which to hang a theory so improbable in itself as that of the flank march, and that is the statement of Tacitus that when the army resumed its march on the second day, after spending the night in the camp four miles from Bedriacum, *Non ut ad pugnam sed ad bellandum profecti confluentis Padis et Aduae* (so M; F. reads *Ardae*; Hardy, *Adrae* or *Hadrae*) *fluminum, sedecim inde milium spatio distantis, petebant* (ii. 40).

Now if the reading *Aduae* is correct, meaning the Adda or Addua (δ' Ἀδούας), it is plain that a blunder is here committed as to the distance from Bedriacum to the mouth of that river. Bedriacum was twenty-two miles east of Cremona; and the mouth of the Adda was seven miles to the west of it—total twenty-nine miles. Deduct the four miles traversed on the first day, and the distance from that camp to the Adda was not sixteen miles, as Tacitus makes it, but twenty-five. The passage, therefore, cannot stand as it is; either the distance is wrong, or the object of the march is wrong. The distances given by Tacitus and by Plutarch are practically the same, the only difference of importance being that Plutarch makes the army march six miles (50 stades) the first day and twelve miles (100 stades) on the second day; whereas Tacitus gives four miles to the first day's march and sixteen miles to the objective made for on the second day. The natural inference is that the text of Tacitus is right as to the distance and wrong as to the name *Aduae*. Mr. Henderson, indeed, would have us believe that Tacitus is right as to the destination, but is wrong as to the distance; and to make this possible, he would arbitrarily alter the numeral in chap. 39 by inserting the word *decimum* after *quartum*, so as to make the first day's march a march of fourteen miles instead of four miles. But such a violent change is not one that any scholar can accept; to adopt it would make the account of Tacitus quite irreconcilable with that of Plutarch, and would throw fresh confusion into the intelligible parts of Plutarch's narrative.

We must fall back, therefore, on the more probable conclusion that the mistake must be in the name *Aduae*. It may be

the mistake of Tacitus himself, or of his copyist. It is possible, as Dr. Hardy plausibly suggests, that the spot aimed at in the march may have been opposite to the confluence with the Po on its south side of a stream called the *Harda* or *Arda* (modern *Arda*) not far from the point where the Vitellians were building their bridge over the Po. And Mr. Henderson is probably right in supposing that the bridge was being built to further a 'strategy of penetration,' on the part of the Vitellian army.

Accepting, therefore, the statement of Tacitus that the Othonian army was making for some point near the river, with a view to camping there for a second night, and that that point was sixteen miles distant from the first camping-place, we may dismiss the idea of a flank march to the mouth of the Adda. The Othonian army *did* swerve from the Postumian road; but it was not to the right of the road, as the flank march would have required, but to the left, that it swerved; for Tacitus describes the conflict between the Vitellian 21st (*Rapax*) with the Othonian 1st (*Adiutrix*) as taking place *inter Padum viamque*.

It is also probable that the point aimed at by the Othonian army was the bridge itself; for we are told that Caecina, who was engaged on the bridge when he received news of the Othonian attack, had not far to go from the bridge to the field of battle. The bridge had already been an object of contention between the armies. It threatened an advance by the Vitellians by the direct route to Rome; and the only object for Otho's taking off with him a considerable part of his army to Brixellum must have been to present a front to a possible direct attack across the river.

In any case the mouth of the Adda cannot have been the objective aimed at. And it is somewhat surprising that Mr. Henderson, who finds so many faults in the military parts of the narrative of Tacitus, should have founded his theory of a flank march on one of the few passages in which Tacitus (or his text) can be almost demonstrated to have made a blunder.

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PRINTED BY
WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND BECCLES.

